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NOT TO BE TAKEN FROM THIS ROOM

THE PHILOSOPHY OF R.G. COLLINGWOOD

by

E. W. Kemp

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THE PHILOSOPHY OF R. G. COLLINGWOOD

A DISSERTATION

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by

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ABSTRACT

THE PHILOSOPHY OF R. G. COLLINGWOOD

R. G. Collingwood published many books, pamphlets and papers. Although the greater proportion of his output was in the field of archaeology, he regarded himself primarily as a philosopher. He was a professor in that subject at Oxford University. He wrote nine major philosophical books, and it is upon a study of these that this exposition and estimation of his philosophy is based.

The first six chapters of this thesis consist (so far as I have been successful) of an exposition of the essence and substance of Collingwood's philosophy. Such an exposition, if it really "exposes", may be valuable, since Collingwood has not himself provided posterity with a complete statement of the substance of his philosophy. Much of it must be inferred from his writings on particular philosophical problems.

The final chapter states my conclusions. Out of consideration for Collingwood, I do not wish to anticipate them here in any detail. When he died in 1943, Collingwood left behind him a substantial contribution--not one without error--but still a substantial contribution to philosophical thought.

Edmonton, Sept. 14, 1956.

E.W.K.

CHAPTER I

THE PHILOSOPHY OF R. G. COLLINGWOOD:

A GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF COLLINGWOOD'S PHILOSOPHY.

There is a good deal of disagreement today about the nature of philosophy. Some philosophers are individuals who pursue their work according to their own definition of it; others, because of certain affinities, have formed themselves, or have been formed by others, into "schools". Even members of the same "school", however, cannot be relied on to agree. Whatever may be the reasons for this internecine strife, it is characteristic of contemporary philosophy.

The common man, of course, knows nothing of this. If he thinks of philosophy at all, he probably thinks of it in one of two ways. He may regard philosophy as a sort of detached reflection on abstract problems; and philosophers as rather queer, somewhat other-worldly characters who, while they go about bumping into buildings, enjoy thinking merely for the sake of thinking. On the other hand, he may think that philosophy has a practical value--in teaching people to submit to the vicissitudes of life in a proper frame of mind, a philosophical frame of mind. The philosopher then becomes a kindly old gentleman, very relaxed, who advises submission to the necessities of universal law.

In either case, the common man is unlikely to regard the disputes among philosophers as very serious, although he may be amused at the idea.

How do philosophers themselves react in this situation?

They take sides. Each individual philosopher is convinced that he alone has the answer, and his main problem is to convert the rest to his view. That such conversions take place, we have the existence of the schools to witness. But there seems to be little hope that philosophers will achieve, in the foreseeable future, the same degree of unity that has been achieved among, say, scientists.

What is the meaning of this? Why the disputes? Is there no need for agreement in philosophy, or is agreement impossible because of the nature of philosophy? If philosophy is merely what each philosopher thinks it is, then we must accept the situation, and seek no further for unity among them. But the fact that philosophers do dispute about the nature of philosophy argues that they think it has a proper nature, exemplified in every case by their own practice. If this is the case, we may look forward hopefully to a solution. And we may regard with more than usual interest the works of a philosopher who claims to have provided it, especially when that philosopher claims not only to solve the problems of philosophy but also to solve those of Art, Religion, Science, and History. Such a philosopher is R. G. Collingwood.

It is possible that Professor Collingwood would disown the claims that I have accused him of making, but I doubt if he could do so in good faith. I do not want to accuse him of bad faith, so I will presume that he would accept the claims I have made on his behalf.

What is the nature of philosophy according to Collingwood? First of all, a philosophy must be a system, and not merely a

system among systems, but a comprehensive system in which everything has its place, and by which everything is explained. This is a substantive definition of philosophy: that is, the substance of philosophy is a system of ideas.

It may be objected that on this definition, philosophy becomes a catch-all. If philosophy includes everything, why have science, religion, and so forth? To this objector, it is pointed out that the idea of an all-encompassing philosophical system does not mean that all the individual discoveries of every individual scientist have a place in philosophy. It means that the philosophical system will explain why there is such a thing as science; what science is; where the place of science is in the scheme of thought; what scientists, as such, ought to do; and, in general terms, how they ought to do it. A philosophical system will do the same for Art, Religion, History, and other forms of organization of human experience.

Is this presumptuous on Collingwood's part? If so, most, if not all philosophers are guilty of the same presumption. Perhaps it is not presumptuous. Perhaps there is a place for such a system of thought. We recognize the fact that scientists among themselves often act at cross-purposes, and certainly they appear at the present time to be acting across the purposes of humanity in general. If it is true that they are forced to do so by "circumstances beyond their control", then this merely means that conflict exists between two "levels" of human purpose, as well as on the same level. And, of course, the fact is that the conflicts within and between different groups of persons, in modern society, are too many to be enumerated in a small

space. There is no need to enumerate them. They continually force themselves upon our attention. Well then, perhaps there is a place for a philosophical system which can resolve these conflicts. Certainly the attempt can do no harm, and it may be worthwhile.

Each branch of every science has its special task to perform. In saying this, I am using the term science in its broadest sense, to include everything from botany to politics. The performance by each of its special task appears to bring all into conflict. Let Philosophy, then, have the special task of systematically reviewing all other performances to prevent conflicts.

There is another argument to show that it is not presumptuous on the part of philosophers to advise the practitioners of other forms of thought. The sciences are eminently practical, some of them, and others are pursued because it is thought they they will some day lead to material benefits. The same is true, in a sense, of Art and History and even Religion. The people who are responsible for the art, the history, and the religion of society are, so to speak, bent to the task of producing something--if it be only a state of mind. Their thinking is generally adapted to an exterior purpose: it is a means to an end.

This is not a criticism. There is certainly nothing wrong with using one's head to solve immediate, practical, material problems. We ought, indeed, to have more of it. But thought, like any other tool, can be better used if one understands what it is in itself. To understand it, we have to reflect on its nature. Let this also be a task of philosophy; and let the products of such reflection

be made available to those practical thinkers who have no time themselves to reflect. This gift may be unwelcome, but if it is offered in a humble and self-effacing manner, along with a card which states that practice is more important than theory, it may be accepted. If so, it will likely be beneficial.

Perhaps this is enough to secure the acceptance of the idea of a philosophical system which acts as an organizing principle over human action. Certainly if it is recognized that this is not, as it may at first appear, an attempt to invade the autonomy of other branches of thought, then the idea of an organizing principle ought to be acceptable.

Philosophy cannot be merely a benevolent busy-body. It must have some business of its own. In addition to reflecting on the general nature of other realms of thought from without, it must also reflect on its own nature from within. This is no less important than the former function of philosophy: in fact it is fundamental. A philosophy which exhibits uncertainty about the nature of its equipment and its method is unlikely to be a repository of good advice.

What is philosophy? It is a system of thought, so general that it includes within itself all other systems. But it includes them in such a way that it does not take over their tasks. It is organizational, because it delineates the proper places of interior systems. It is advisory, because it has a wider view than any more particular pursuit, and so can foresee and prevent conflicts. It is specialized, because it is removed from the necessity of thinking to a practical and immediate purpose, and so it can have the special purpose,

which is also practical, of thinking about thinking. It is rational, because it consists of thoughts and rationality is the criterion of validity in thinking.

If philosophy is all these things, it may be suggested that such a philosophy does not exist. And it is true that much of what is called philosophy does not correspond to the above definition. The definition may be regarded as normative with respect to those "philosophies" which depart from it. It is what they ought to be, as distinct from what they are. Nevertheless, the fact that there is such a definition means that there is also such a philosophy, because so to define it is at the same time to bring it into existence. It may not be fully formed; it may not achieve all that it expects of itself. Yet to define philosophy in this way is to take the first action toward making it what it ought to be. The action is successful. From the moment of definition philosophy takes the form it ought to have, and it remains only to fill that form with the content which experience provides.

Further, if this is the definition of philosophy, then many philosophies so-called are really pseudo-philosophies. They await conversion.

We should return now to the common man, who is still where we left him, full of misapprehensions about the nature of philosophy. We can see that his attitude is not without its reasons. The philosopher's contribution to practical affairs is necessarily unseen, because it is made indirectly, through the mediums of science, art, religion, politics and so on, when it is made at all. And it has been

made. There have been philosophies in the past, great systems of knowledge, which have informed the practices of their age. Some contemporary philosophies have made isolated contributions to the solution of practical problems, but these have been vitiated by the absence of a comprehensive system. This is why they have been isolated. And in any case, they go unsung because they are unseen.

There is a further justification for the attitude that philosophy has little if any practical value. The power of science, and the power of politics is demonstrated by their failures no less than by their successes, while the power of philosophy is in the background. But worse than this, the power of philosophy, perhaps more than any other power, has been dissipated in disputes. Political disputes, because they have material effects, give an impression of strength, but philosophical disputes, which appear to lack these effects, give an impression of weakness.

With the appearance upon the contemporary scene of a new systematic philosophy which on the one hand will resolve its own internal conflicts, and on the other will be increasingly able to direct human affairs, we may expect in the future a society which is informed by a sense of purpose which has hitherto been absent. Whether this contribution of philosophy to life will be appreciated does not really matter, although it would be nice. It will be a fruitful contribution, and that is what counts.

This is philosophy on the Collingwood plan. To the sceptic, it may appear grandiose. But one ought really to applaud the high purpose which is evident in it. And if one thinks about it, one

must agree that there is a great need for such a philosophy, especially at this time when the world is racked by troubles, and most philosophers appear unconcerned by the necessity for large scale reconstruction. Whatever else may be said, we ought not to say that there is no need for the type of thinking that Collingwood is trying to do.

This is a brief, and too general account of what Collingwood has to offer. It lacks certain qualifications which may make Collingwood more, or perhaps less, acceptable. These qualifications and extensions will be provided as we proceed. The aim of the foregoing account was, by means of general observations, to give an impression of his philosophy as a whole. It will perhaps not require revision, but it must be extended and intensified.

To eliminate the possibility, or at least to reduce the probability, that this general impression will be doubted, it is advisable to justify it in the next chapter by referring to the sources of the observations upon which it is based. When this has been done, we can proceed to a more detailed account of Collingwood's philosophy. This account will begin in Chapter III.

CHAPTER II

IMPRESSION JUSTIFIED

What are the sources of the observations and impressions given in the preceding chapter? By answering this question, I hope to provide a more particular understanding of Professor Collingwood's thought and action.

First of all, Professor Collingwood did not set out in any particular place his philosophical system. Nor are his philosophical works taken in order the systematic exposition of a system of thought. What then is the evidence for saying that his philosophy is a system at all, much less the type of system I have described?

Professor Collingwood wrote, I believe, ten philosophical books (of which I have read nine).¹ Each one of these nine is prefaced by a statement of the motive from which it is written. These expressions of the motive from which each book proceeds are, of course, important evidence as to what Collingwood thought a philosopher ought to be doing.

Then, too, in various places Collingwood did make explicit statements about the nature of philosophy; what it ought and ought not to be. While these do not say all that we have said about Collingwood's philosophy and philosophy in general, they do fill out our definition.

Finally, there are implications lying behind Collingwood's explicit statements. Collingwood may or may not have recognized these. It is very likely, in fact, that he recognized some and not

1. The book which I have not read is Outlines of a Philosophy of Art (1925). It has been out of print for many years, and it is difficult to lay hands on a copy. In any case, the whole content of the book is revised and included in a work which supersedes it, The Principles of Art (1938).

others: this will be demonstrated later. But whether he recognized them or not, and whether he would accept them as part of what he really meant or not, still, as long as they are validly drawn, we are entitled to use them as evidence for the construction of a general picture of his philosophy.

These then, are the three sources of the impressions given in the preceding chapter. Do they actually contribute to what has been said? Before proceeding to demonstrate that they do, I have to meet an objection. It may be argued that the above evidence can only indicate what philosophy is for Collingwood, and not what it ought to be for anyone else. To meet this objection, I will have to show that Collingwood regards the definition, which he gives by implication, as prescriptive. If I can do this, then it can be left to the reader whether or not he wishes to accept the prescription. The evidence that Collingwood regards his plan for philosophy as universally legislative is forthcoming. I will ask the objector to hold his argument in abeyance in the meantime.

The idea that philosophy ought to act in an advisory capacity toward other bodies of thought, I draw from the prefaces and the content of several of his books. We will glance briefly, but sufficiently, at this evidence. Religion and Philosophy (1916), was written to show the relation between religion and philosophy, to separate the two, and to show specifically the proper function of religion. Speculum Mentis (1924), characteristically sub-titled "The Map of Knowledge" has as its purpose the resolution of certain conflicting claims of Art, Religion, Science, History, and Philosophy.

Collingwood's philosophy, as expressed in Speculum Mentis, was designed to arrange these forms of thought on a scale, and to show what function is proper to each. An Essay on Philosophical Method (1933) was written as a contribution to the removal of chaos among philosophers. This chaos was to be removed by demonstrating to the parties in the conflict what philosophy really is, as such, in the hope that they would, as they should, unite in pursuing the real philosophy as opposed to the various pseudo-philosophies. The Idea of Nature, (much of which was written in 1934, although the book was published posthumously) consisted largely of advice to scientific theorists as to how they should proceed in the future. The Idea of History (1936, also posthumous) did the same for historians, the Principles of Art (1938), for artists. In An Essay on Metaphysics (1940), Collingwood returns to the scientists, by asserting that the proper business of the metaphysician is to study the absolute pre-suppositions of science, and his last book, The New Leviathan (1942) is a manual for politicians.

Upon this evidence, we can accept provisionally, and while awaiting further demonstration, the idea that philosophy ought to advise other bodies of thought as to what they really ought to be doing. What was said above about the Essay on Philosophical Method may convince the objector of the preceding paragraph that Collingwood regards his definition of philosophy as mandatory upon all those who would call themselves philosophers.

We come now to the evidence for the idea that to Collingwood philosophy means an all-inclusive system. Speculum Mentis is a schematism, in which all the main bodies of thought are arranged.

Taken together, all the other books contribute to the enlargement and the fuller understanding of the schematism. In one of them, the Essay on Philosophical Method, the assertion that philosophy must be a system is explicitly made. It must be a system as complete, as objective, as united as the wisdom and the ingenuity of philosophers can make it, and as final as the conditions of constant change will permit. That is, it must explain everything up to the present, finalizing the past, and making us ready for the future.

Finally, as an example of the third source of the contention that philosophy is or ought to be a comprehensive system and at the same time an organizing principle, we come to Collingwood's theory of knowledge. This theory is never fully set forth, and our knowledge of it is derived from certain explicit statements occurring in various places throughout Collingwood's works, and also from an implied framework which unites these statements. But Collingwood has a theory of knowledge--I ask the reader to accept this on trust until I come to the explanation of what that theory is--and whatever the details of a theory of knowledge, its existence implies the idea of system.

If this is true, no philosopher can assert a theory of knowledge and at the same time deny that he is asserting a system. He must be asserting a system, and not just a system, but the system. Further, every philosopher must have a theory of knowledge, whether he asserts one or not, and consequently he must also have a system as part of his mental equipment. This not only justifies my contention that Collingwood has a system, but also Collingwood's further contention that philosophy, as such, must be systematic.

It remains to be seen, if course, whose system, express or implied, is the correct one, but this question can be left unanswered until we have considered in much more detail Collingwood's system, as well as some others which are objects of his evangelical campaign.

We may now proceed to the detailed study.

CHAPTER III
THE MAP OF KNOWLEDGE

There are two books in which Collingwood gives his most extended statements on the nature of philosophy as such. In the first of these, Speculum Mentis, he depicts philosophy in its relation to Art, Religion, Science, and History.

There are two sides to this depiction. One might be called the practical side, because in it philosophy is exhibited in action, exposing the proper nature of the other bodies of thought, their relation to each other and to the scheme of thought in general. The book, after all, is a philosophical book, and it pursues one of the purposes of philosophy which we have previously described; that of explaining and giving advice to other bodies of thought. There is also a theoretical side to the depiction. Philosophy itself is explicitly analyzed in the course of the book, and the theory of philosophy is set forth as a guide to its practice.

What is said of philosophy in Speculum Mentis is more general than exhaustive, and what is said of other disciplines is more an example of what philosophy can do for practical thinkers, than a complete performance of the task. Nevertheless, this book establishes a trend which is more fully pursued in later books, and this is why we consider it first.

Speculum Mentis is an early work, and the reader of this thesis may think that I am ignoring the possibility of later development in Collingwood's philosophy. Indeed, I am not. The possibility of later development becomes an actuality. Collingwood's thought did undergo development, but I do not think there was any radical departure

from the scheme laid down in this, his second book of nine. The fundamental structure of his thinking, in my view, remained the same.

It is no more than honest to remark at this point that T. M. Knox, a student of Collingwood and the editor of his posthumous works, disagrees with the position I have outlined in the preceding paragraph. He believes that Collingwood degenerated from constructive philosophy to scepticism; and in particular that a later pre-occupation with history made him "turn traitor" to his philosophical vocation. In the face of such distinguished opposition I will maintain my stand for the present, but retain the right to change my mind before I have finished.²

To return to Speculum Mentis. In it, Collingwood puts forward the idea that art, religion, science, history, and philosophy are in a sense opposed to each other, and he attempts to rationalize this opposition.

What is the nature of this opposition? We will begin the demonstration of this by means of an example. The essence of religion is the idea of God--a supernatural being, or an external organizing principle. The essence of science is the idea of natural law. Without the idea of the supernatural, religion would not be religion; science would be impossible without the idea of natural law. These two ideas are thus the very basis of religion and science--and they are opposed to each other. The idea of a god standing outside the natural world is inimical to science, and the idea of natural law is only acceptable to religion if the laws are regarded as a manifestation of God.

2. Mr. Knox sets forth his position in his introduction to The Idea of History (vii-xx). I have summarized it on page 73 of this thesis.

The same is true of the relations between all the other bodies of thought. When these activities are fully understood it is found that they are based upon opposite ideas about the nature of reality, and the process by which it is apprehended.

It will be objected that, as a matter of observable fact, these bodies of thought are complementary. Each gives us knowledge of a certain aspect of reality, or knowledge of reality derived from its own point of view. When all are taken together there is a confluence of ideas which redounds to our general benefit. This is so because, rather than in spite of, the fact that each rejects interference from the others.

It is true that there are, for example, numerous attempts to achieve a truce between religion and science; attempts to show that they complement rather than conflict with each other. And there may be evidence from which it can be argued that this is generally true of all branches of human activity. Unless it can be shown that these observations are superficial, the idea of mutual opposition collapses.

Here a distinction has to be made. It is possible for people to do things, even quite complicated things, without knowing exactly what they are doing. People who are engaged in the solution of immediate and practical problems do not often pause to reflect on the theoretical implications of their practices, and their practices may be successful in spite of the fact that they do not understand these implications. People are able to think successfully without understanding the essential nature of logic, which underlies all

thought. There are even some cases to be found where reflection on the theoretical implications of a practical activity, by the person performing it, would inhibit and perhaps obstruct the activity. Artistic creation appears to be a case of this kind. It ought to be spontaneous, not calculated. Indeed, there may be many instances where reflection on the abstract nature of an activity is no part of the activity itself, and where such reflection is not necessary to the activity at any time.

If this is admitted, then the possibility must also be admitted that when a philosopher like Collingwood reflects on the pre-suppositions which are implicit in various forms of activity, he may discover truths about them which the practitioners do not recognize and may even reject. In this instance, that they are fundamentally mutually opposed to each other, quite regardless of the superficial appearance of congeniality which they may present to themselves and to common opinion.

Before we go on to a description of the nature of this mutual opposition, there are a couple of further objections to be met.

It may be said that there are some scientists who are also artists, and who at the same time are adherents of religion. It is also possible that in spare moments they think about philosophy. How could all these tendencies be opposed within the same person?

In the first place, it is unlikely that such persons, combining all these tendencies, exist. But there may be some who appear to combine two or three. This again must be regarded as mere appearance. There is really no combination of tendencies, because such tendencies will not combine. In order to produce works of art, the artist

must give his whole self up to this purpose. Similarly, to discover the working out of natural laws, a scientist must do the same. In each case, the agent must think or feel in the manner proper to the activity he is pursuing. He cannot be both completely a scientist and an artist at the same time.

There are devout scientists who go to church on Sundays, and who construct passable paintings in free time, but they are not divines and artists at the same time that they are scientists. If they believe that they are, they are deluding themselves as to the nature of one or more of these pursuits.

The second objection which has to be considered takes this form: Collingwood, as interpreted, has been trying to show that there is a basic conflict between all the forms of organization of experience he considers. Suppose we accept this. Now we are told, these conflicts will be rationalized. But if the conflicts are really basic, how can they be rationalized? Can there be a kind of rationalization of conflicts, which leaves the conflicts in existence?

There can. There is. In the course of describing the particular nature of the conflicts, it will also be shown that they are arranged on a sort of ascending scale, with philosophy at the apex. Philosophy resolves the conflicts, by showing that they are necessary characteristics of the forms of knowledge between which they exist, and by explaining their necessity. At the same time--and it is this characteristic of philosophy which places it at the apex of human knowledge--within philosophy that misapprehension which has been all along the basis for the conflicts in lesser bodies of knowledge is for the first time correctly apprehended and so removed.

Why continue to pursue the "lesser" activities, once their error has been discovered and corrected by philosophy? Why not let philosophy henceforth carry on alone, or why not let all artists, scientists, and so forth become philosophers? Simply because the error happens to confer upon each activity the peculiar virtue which it possesses. This is why it is a necessary error. Philosophy does not explain it away, because this would be to explain away the very existence of the forms of experience which it characterizes. Philosophy merely explains what the error is, and why it is.

In the next chapter, then, we will proceed to explain the essential character, and the fundamental error which is the ground of opposition between each--art, religion, science, and history. We will arrange these on an ascending scale, in order to show how each supersedes the one below it. In doing all this we will be fulfilling a proper function of philosophy, and when we have it done, we can place philosophy where it belongs--at the top. And this is justice, for has it not been philosophy that organizes and explains for lesser bodies of thought what they cannot explain for themselves?

CHAPTER IV

THE SCALE OF THE FORMS OF KNOWLEDGE

We have to consider art, religion, science and history. What have these forms of experience in common? Each implies the existence of some object beyond itself. For history, that object is the human past; for science, the material world and its discoverable laws; for religion, the supernatural; and for art, it is beauty.

What is the attitude toward its object that characterizes the frame of mind proper to each?

Art When we examine the objects of art--music, paintings, poems, novels--we notice that the reality of the object is not necessarily asserted. It may have no existence outside the work in which it subsists. Even in the historical novel, or the biography, where the characters depicted exist, or have existed, some of what is said of them is imaginary. It is this imaginary part that is the pure form of art. To suppose that Dr. Johnson never existed does not alter at all the artistic quality of Boswell's Life. This is so, because what is truly artistic in any work of art is independent of the real existence of the object depicted. And this is as true of the most highly realistic creations as it is of the so-called "non-objective" art.

The difference between a work of art and something which is not a work of art is the element of imagination. Both may contain assertive statements, but in the work of art these will be merely a framework upon which the product of the artist's imagination is hung. It is his imagination which creates and invests the whole

with beauty, and it is beauty alone which constitutes the artistic element in the work.

Art as such, then, is pure imagination. The object of art may or may not exist, but it must be supposed. That is all.

RELIGION

Whereas in art the existence of beauty is supposed, in religion the existence of the supernatural is asserted.

But although it is asserted, it is never described. It cannot be, because the nature of the supernatural (if we can use the term 'nature' in this connection) is such that it is beyond description. It is true that there are attached to religion certain statements which purport to be descriptions of God, Heaven, and Hell. But if we take these to a divine whose religious sense is highly developed, and question him about them, he will be forced to admit that they are a mere facade. He will not be able to justify the descriptions, except insofar as he thinks them to be derived from the nature of the ultimate reality. And when it is shown that this is indescribable, he will fall back on the bare assertion of the supernatural, which is accepted as the primary article of faith.

There are other statements, usually taken to be a part of religion, which do describe states of affairs. Jesus driving the money-lenders from the temple, for example, and the so-called Immaculate Conception. The first of these examples is clearly no part of religion as such; it might as well be a part of a novel. Its contribution to religion proper--to the idea of the supernatural--is very indirect. Its significance is more political than truly religious as everyone recognizes. The second, the idea of the Immaculate Conception, has been the

subject of considerable argument. The argument always finally resolves itself into a question whether the Immaculate Conception will or will not be accepted as a matter of faith. If it will be so accepted, we have religion as such; if not, we have heresy.

So religion asserts, but does not describe the nature of its object.

SCIENCE

The main aim of the scientist is to discover the uniformities in the objective, material world. He has to believe, in order to be a scientist, that there are certain laws according to which objective phenomena are organized. These laws, of course, are laws of motion, not static entities. The reality which the scientist asserts is thus distinct from that which is asserted in religion. It is capable of being described, and it is the description which forms the body of scientific thought.

Since the laws which form the body of scientific thought are not directly observable--this is as true of the Newtonian Principle of Causation as it is of the laws of modern physics--they are arrived at by a process of abstraction. But the scientist has to believe that once they are arrived at by this process, they are really being discovered: that is, that they exist. Further, he has to believe that the discovery of these laws is the discovery of the essential truth about the material world.

HISTORY

And what of history? The historian believes in the existence of the human past, and he attempts to reconstruct it for the benefit of present and future generations. In doing

so he is to some extent dependent upon sources, but by asking the right questions of his sources, and by using his reason to discover implications, he can go beyond what is explicitly contained in any source or in all of his sources taken together. When he does this, he is reconstructing the past in his own mind. This is rather different from the activity of the scientist. The laws which the scientist discovers are, in a sense, abstractions: they are unseen to him, and they never have been seen by anyone. But the events in the past which are reconstructed by the historian are concrete events. Unlike the objects which, for the scientist, are connected by abstract laws, historical events, concrete in themselves, are connected by other events which are also concrete. There is in history no such thing as the conception of abstract law. If there are laws, they must be the concrete connectedness of concrete events. They are, or have been, observable.

BASIS OF
OPPOSITION

Each of these "frames of mind" then has a different attitude towards its object. It is this difference in attitude that characterizes each form of experience and sets it apart from all the rest. What is the basis for the assertion, made in the previous chapter, that they are not merely set apart from, but opposed to each other?

The fact is that the objects of art, religion, science, and history, are really one and the same object. This object, common to all these forms of experience, is the external material world. The opposition consists not in the fact that in each the same object is conceived in a different way--this would merely make them different--but in the fact that each implies that this is the only way in which it

can be rightly conceived.

This has already been demonstrated in the case of religion and science. For the scientist as such the idea of God is not merely extraneous to the idea of natural law, it is opposed to that idea; and for the really religious person the idea of natural law is not merely something outside the idea of God, it is an attempt to remove the idea of God. If there appears to be any 'rapprochement' between the two, it can only mean that the scientist has given up the idea of natural law as basic, or that the divine has accepted the idea of natural law as an expression of God's purpose.

As for the artist, he cannot at the same time behave toward the world as an artist ought, and conceive it as supernatural, or as a system of abstract laws, or as a dynamic of historical events. For him, as an artist, the world has to be what he imagines it to be. If he began to conceive rather than imagine it, he would cease to be an artist. Consequently, the person who is most fully an artist is a person who refuses to conceive the world, and insists on imagining or supposing beautiful states of affairs which may or may not exist--it is immaterial to him. Whether or not they exist, in fact, is a question which ought not to be asked. "Beauty is truth, truth beauty; that is all ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."

For the historian, again, the ultimate reality must be expressed in terms of human purpose as this purpose is exposed in events. If the historian considers art, religion, and science, and he often does, these are regarded, not as true descriptions of the nature of reality, but as mere events. He is interested in them only as

events, or rather as manifestations of human purpose, because reality for him is merely the story of the past purposes of mankind as made clear in their past actions.

PHILOSOPHY We come now to philosophy "the end and crown of all knowledge". And philosophy will demonstrate, first of all, that all these forms of knowledge partake of a common error, and then, that each partakes of this common error in a manner peculiar to itself, and that this peculiarity determines the position of each form on the ascending scale. It must be remembered that in demonstrating this, philosophy is demonstrating its own superiority over the other forms of knowledge.

ERROR OF The error lies in the implication, common to each, that
'EXTERNALITY' there is a world external to the observer.

 In the case of art the external world, the object, is merely implied. We have already seen that it is not asserted. But every act of artistic creation is a supposition of a certain state of affairs, and although it is not asserted that this state of affairs has existence, the act of supposing it implies that there are such things as states of affairs and that some of these actually do exist, The artist may or may not recognize this implication: if he does so, it is not a part of his being as an artist. As an artist, he merely implies its existence, and as we have seen, he does nothing more for it. His time is taken up with imaginary suppositions, not with the real world which he implies.

 Religion does not merely imply but asserts the existence

of a supernatural reality, but just because this reality is supernatural, religion is powerless to describe it. Religion supersedes art by asserting where art merely implies. It is itself superseded by science, because science describes what religion merely asserts.

Science, however, deludes itself in believing that the external world which it describes actually exists. But it really is, and forever must remain, a tissue of abstractions. Scientific laws are said to be hypotheses which have been verified by experiment, but the fact is that scientific hypotheses can never be verified. The most that can be said for them is that they become more and more probable. The history of science is replete with "laws", once regarded as verified, but now recognized as theories which were convenient for a time and have since been superseded. All such hypotheses may be superseded; none can ever be said with certainty to have objective existence--to be, in the full sense, a law.

There are two reasons for this. First, all experimental verification is indirect. The laws which are supposedly thus verified are never seen themselves. Hume demonstrated this when he described the principle of causation as an idea which arises from the observation of the constant conjunction of events. That certain events constantly occur in conjunction, we can observe, but we can never observe the power by virtue of which we say that one causes the other. This power is and must remain hypothetical. Secondly, laws cannot be abrogated at will; and what science says is a law today, it expects will still be a law tomorrow. But this projection of laws into the future depends on a principle that what is true of the world today will also be true tomorrow.

This principle can never be verified. It may be said that it has proved to be so in the past, but even if that were true it might not hold good for the future. We have faith that it will hold good, and this faith may have a certain amount of justification because of past verifications, but it is still, at bottom, faith. The fact is that this principle of the uniformity of nature has not always held good in the past. Some of the uniformities which scientists have expected have failed to occur. And if this had only happened once, instead of several times, it would still be enough to show that the principle is not capable of absolute verification.

The body of science then is composed of unverifiable abstractions.

History, as we have seen, is composed of concrete events. Taken together these events exhibit equally concrete connections and thus they form a concrete unity. History supersedes science by being concrete where science is abstract.

Even in history we have the error, however, of the disjunction of the material world from the mind. In history, indeed, this error is exposed in its most pure form. The object of the historical mind is outside the observer, and he is no part of the concrete unity. The historian explains everything else in the most concrete terms, but in so doing he neglects to explain himself.

The common error of all these forms of thought is the assertion, express or implied, that there is a dualism of subject and object, such that the subject is outside the object. In each of these forms we have come progressively closer to the removal of this error.

In art, the error was implied but not even recognized. In religion, it was brought out into the open. In science, the object, the external world, was described, but we have seen that as described, it was merely an abstraction. And when we arrived at history, we saw the objective world become the expression of human purpose in events. This, at least, was concrete; and it had the added virtue of exposing the fundamental error of itself and all previous forms of thought in the most clearcut manner--as the separation of the historical world from the mind that conceives it.

So we have the scale of forms, from art through religion and science to history. It is time to say something about philosophy itself.

ERROR
OVERCOME

Philosophy recognizes that the suppositions of art, the supernatural world of religion, the abstract world of science, and the concrete purposive world of history are all mental creations. It recognizes also that these creations necessarily appear to their creators as external. Is there any way of verifying this "externality"? There is not. The artist does not even make the attempt. The religious man asserts the external but cannot describe it. The abstract external world of the scientist can by no means be verified. The actions which compose past history can never be verified more than to say that they are thoughts within the minds of historians and people who read historical works. The documents and evidences upon which history is based, are only documents and evidences, they are not history. If it be objected that they are material objects, then they are subject to the same objections which can be brought against the

external world as conceived by science.

The only things of which we can be certain are minds. We can be certain of the rest only as they are the creations of minds. To suppose that we can be certain of the rest is to commit the fundamental error of the separation of the object from its subject, the separation of the material world from the universal mind which creates it.

NECESSITY
OF THE ERROR

This error, however, is not absolute error: if it were, art, religion, science, and history would be worthless pursuits. They are not worthless; they do provide us with knowledge. The error simply consists in thinking or implying that they are supplying knowledge of something other than the mind itself. What we gain from these forms of experience remains to a large extent intact in spite of the error, and in fact we gain it because of the error.

The external worlds which are in error created by these forms of experience lesser than philosophy, are like mirrors in which the mind can see itself. It is in this sense that they are necessary. And like a mirror, they reflect a great deal of detailed information but this is distorted by being a mirror image instead of the real thing. The virtue of philosophy consists in its understanding that what we see in the lesser bodies of knowledge is a mirror image, so that in philosophy the distortion can be removed.

IDEALISM

Is this idealism? It may be, but if it is, it is not idealism in the usual sense. We are not asserting here that there is no distinction between the subject and the object. Nor

are we asserting that the material world does not exist, or that if it does exist, it is composed of mind. What we are asserting is that the difference between subject and object is at the same time a case of dependence, each upon the other. The material world exists, but it exists for us because it is observed, and in the way it is observed. It is thus, as far as we are concerned, a dependent reality--not an external reality--but a reality nevertheless.

We have here seen philosophy acting as an organizing principle, explaining the essential nature of other forms of thought, and arranging these forms on a scale according to their respective merits. We have, in the course of this action, received some intimation of the essential nature of philosophy itself; namely, that philosophy is in the fullest sense concerned with the mind.

To know in more detail what philosophy is we must examine its method.

CHAPTER V

PHILOSOPHY AS A METHOD

PART ONE: GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON METHODOLOGY

Reflection on its own nature is a necessary part of philosophy, though it need not be a necessary part of all human activity. In fact, other branches of human activity can specialize in the provision of practical knowledge precisely because philosophy assumes the office of theoretical reflection for them as well as for itself. But we are here concerned with that part of philosophy which consists of reflection upon its own nature.

We have spoken already of the lack of unanimity among philosophers as to the proper nature of philosophy, and we have argued that philosophy must have a proper nature. Certain characteristics of that nature have already been described, but nothing has as yet been said about method. If philosophy is a rational activity it must have a method, and if that method can be described this will be an essential contribution to the understanding of philosophy. This is the contribution that Collingwood attempts to make in his Essay on Philosophical Method, in the hope that his definition of method will, by its truth, recommend itself to other philosophers and so result in a diminution of the disputes which weaken philosophy.

It is sometimes thought that we can best arrive at the idea of any method by first defining the subject matter upon which that method is to be employed, or by defining the end towards which the method is to be used as a means. This may be true if we are considering the method in conjunction with a subject matter or an end that is already known, but it cannot be the case in philosophy. In the first place, the

subject matter of philosophy is insufficiently known for us to devise a method on that basis, and in the second, the ends and aims of philosophy are always provisional and temporary, never final. We cannot hope to devise a philosophical method on the basis of the end it is to achieve, for the achievement of the end for which the method was devised would only present philosophy with a new end, which might demand another method.

We have then to fall back on the one thing that we do know about philosophy; namely, that it is an activity. It is we philosophers who carry on that activity, and we must reflect upon it so that we come to know exactly what we are doing. What we discover will be the method of philosophy, provided, of course, that we do not delude ourselves or fall into errors along the way. But this is a chance we must take.

In Speculum Mentis Collingwood said that the object of all knowledge is the universal mind. Now, it may be objected, he is saying that we do not know what the object of philosophical knowledge is, and hence we cannot base our understanding of philosophical method upon knowledge of that object. Surely this is a contradiction.

It is true that we know that the object of all knowledge is the universal mind, but it is also true that we do not fully understand the nature of that object. Hence we would be committing a grave error if we attempted to derive our conception of method from the nature of an object that we do not fully understand, and may understand only in a very rudimentary way. The object of philosophical knowledge is to come to understand that object. Until that aim is fulfilled; that is,

until our knowledge of the mind is complete, there can be no method based upon it.

Here we must recognize another possibility. As the mind comes to know itself, it changes itself, giving itself a new quality which has yet to be known, and it is altogether likely that this process will go on to infinity. The project of basing philosophical method on the object of philosophy is thus doomed from the start. It has been attempted, but only by those who have a mistaken conception of philosophy. This is a conception which we hope to correct.

One more thing before we proceed. We know that philosophy is an activity; and more than this, it is an activity of thinking. In reflecting upon it as an activity, as a method of thinking, we are thinking about thought. Consequently, when we say that it is part of philosophy's task to reflect upon its own nature, we mean that it is the task of philosophy to think about philosophical thought. We have already shown that philosophy also consists of thinking about the thought of other forms of practical activity in a way that they do not or cannot think for themselves. Now, this indicates that the object of philosophical thought is always thought itself.

This is consistent with the idea that the object of all knowledge is mind, because what is mind but thought? It also indicates pretty clearly that in describing philosophical method we are coming closer to the knowledge of the mind which is the true end of philosophy. This is important. We had better get on with it.

PART TWO: TRADITIONAL CLASSIFICATION IN SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS

Four great philosophers of the past--Socrates, Plato, Descartes and Kant--have made significant contributions to the study of philosophical method. It is no part of our subject to expound the nature of these contributions, beyond making the point that in each case they have been fruitful for the philosophy of the time in which they were made, and for the period immediately succeeding. But there has always come a time when a new method was required, and it has been the task of some philosopher to provide it. Contemporary philosophy stands in such a condition because the unifying influence of the Kantian method has been dissipated in disputes. It is Collingwood's hope that he can call attention to the necessity for methodological definition, and perhaps go some way toward providing a method.

There are two types of method in common use among philosophers today, against which Collingwood wishes to warn his readers, while at the same time making clear the special characteristics--the distinguishing marks--of the truly philosophical method.

The first of these is a method based on the traditional logic. The second is characteristically modern: it is that of the sceptical schools of philosophy--the critical and the analytic, in both of which we can detect a resemblance to Logical Positivism. Collingwood pursues his attack against the first of these methods throughout the Essay on Philosophical Method, by contrasting two kinds of science--natural science and mathematics--in which the method is often supposedly used, with his own philosophical method. His attack against the second is deferred until his own method has been expounded.

How is it that the rules of traditional logic may be applicable in science, but not in philosophy? First, what are the rules of traditional logic with which Collingwood is here concerned?

TRADITIONAL
CLASSIFICATION

To understand the doctrine of classification and division we will study an example--the concept 'quadrilateral'. But first we will have to make a distinction between the concept, or the idea of "quadrilateralness", and the object of the concept--actual existing quadrilaterals. There is some doubt as to whether the latter really do exist, and it is generally believed that objective quadrilaterals are only approximations to the ideal concept of the quadrilateral.³ We need not concern ourselves with this matter at the moment, but we ought to remember it. We will examine first the concept and later its instances, and the relation which, according to traditional logic, pertains between the two.

It is well to point out as an example of something stated earlier in general terms, that in studying the concept 'quadrilateral' we are studying an idea. Remember--philosophy is "thinking about thinking".

Every concept has an essence which differentiates it from other concepts. The essence of the concept quadrilateral lies in its being the idea of a plane figure in which a space is enclosed by four straight sides. We will call this essence the generic essence, and the concept the generic concept. The reason for this nomenclature will be made apparent in a moment. Within the concept quadrilateral,

3. Almost everyone will agree that nowhere in the world is there a line which is truly straight--as is the ideal straight line of the geometer. If this is so, neither can there be a true quadrilateral, because a quadrilateral is ideally composed of straight lines.

there are differentiations: there are the ideas of regular and irregular quadrilaterals. Although these ideas differ from each other, both partake of the generic essence. The differentiations within the generic concept we will call specific differentiations. This is enough explanation for the idea of "quadrilateralness".

We proceed now to the objective instances of the concept--so-called real quadrilaterals.

Every object in the world which is a four-sided plane figure enclosing a space belongs to the genus 'quadrilateral'. There are different kinds of such figures, but we are concerned only with two--regular and irregular. These kinds belong to two species within the genus. All the objects which manifest the generic essence of the concept are gathered into a large class called the genus; this is classification. They are separated into smaller sub-classes which correspond to the specific differentiations of the concept, and these are called species. This is division.

Now, what is the relation between the concept and its instances? The relation is such that when we proceed in classifying and dividing the instances of a concept, there is no overlap between classes. This means that every actual quadrilateral falls into one and only one of the sub-classes. These classes are mutually exclusive. Moreover, when all the instances have been sorted out and placed in their appropriate sub-classes there is an absolute correspondence between the number and the kind of instances and the sub-classes provided for them. The totality of the instances exhausts the genus.

Such, in brief, is the traditional theory of classification and division. It was necessary to undertake this somewhat detailed

treatment, because it will be shown that the essential difference between the concepts of philosophy and other concepts is that the concepts of philosophy and their corresponding instances cannot be classified and divided in this way.

The example used above was taken from the field of mathematics, but it might as well have been taken from one of the classificatory systems of natural science. Classification cannot be rigid in the latter as it is in the former, but that it can be successfully used, the history of natural science proves. True, in natural science there are exceptions, but they are the type of exception which "proves the rule", because they can usually be fitted into the system of classification without damaging it. We must conclude that classification on the traditional plan is characteristic of mathematics, and is possible in natural science. What of philosophy?

PART THREE: OVERLAP OF CLASSES

Philosophy, too, is concerned with concepts. The concepts of philosophy, like those of mathematics and science, exhibit specific differentiations within the generic essence. Thus the concepts of philosophy appear to be amenable to the type of classification that we have outlined above. It is this appearance, no doubt, which has led to the adoption of such a system by many philosophers. This is unfortunate, because it is merely an appearance, and when we attempt to fit the instances into the conceptual framework we almost invariably fail. If we recognize the failure, that is all right, because the recognition sets us on the path toward a proper system. But too often the failure

goes unrecognized, and the effects of this are disastrous for the philosophy in which it occurs. Indeed, such failures appear to have infected the whole body of philosophy.

TRADITIONAL Here again, an example will illustrate. Let us take
CLASSIFICATION
IN PHILOSOPHY: the concept 'good' as it applies to actions. Tradi-
OVERLAP
tionally, there are regarded to be three specific
differentiations within that concept. Goods which are productive of
pleasure, goods which have utility as means toward some end, and goods
which are 'right' as proceeding from a sense of duty. We have a generic
concept and its specific differentiations, precisely the same as in
mathematics. Let us now proceed to classify and divide the instances.

We will first observe as many actions as we can, and
from these we will select those which are good for any reason whatever.
These comprise the genus. Now we will examine them as to whether they
are pleasurable, expedient, or right. It is at this point that the in-
adequacy of traditional classification manifests itself, for examination
of these acts will show that some which are expedient are also right and
productive of pleasure. How can these instances be accommodated within
the traditional system? I leave it to the imagination of the reader
what are the possible combinations of differentiations within one
instance of the concept 'good'. If he also reflects on the number of
actions which proceed from mixed motives, to say nothing of mixed
effects, he will see that to leave out all ambiguous instances in order
to maintain the classification system is to restrict moral philosophy
to a very small number of actions.

Moreover, the situation is even worse than this. A

number of these good actions, upon examination, will be seen to contain an element of evil. Suppose that a man is adrift with his wife and mother-in-law in a small boat (a situation fraught with dreadful possibilities). He is an experienced navigator, so he knows that it will probably be a certain number of days before they will reach a lane of sea traffic where they will be picked up. There is food enough for two, but not for three, to last that period. He is very much attached to his wife but he dislikes his mother-in-law intensely. Besides, his wife is pregnant, and although he does not particularly like children he feels that it is his duty to preserve this infant as his contribution to posterity. His wife, by the way, is very much attached to her mother. What should he do? Jump overboard himself, or throw out mother-in-law? Whatever he does, when the philosopher comes to examine the action, he will find it mixed, both as to motive and effect. If it is mother-in-law who has drowned, we cannot doubt that the husband experienced an evil pleasure as she slipped into the sea. If he saw that his duty lay in another direction, and sacrificed himself, we cannot help feeling that it might have been better the other way round.

There is thus an element of evil present in some good acts, and there is a possibility that it may be present in all. Certainly it is present in every act of which we can say "this was good, but it could have been better". Any act that in the circumstances "could have been better" is evil with respect to the ideal act with which it is compared, at the same time that it is good with respect to other acts which might have been performed in the same circumstances, proceeding from baser motives to less beneficial results.

CONCLUSION There seems to be an overlap between the sub-classes of
FOR
PHILOSOPHY the concept 'good', and even between the two concepts,
'good' and 'evil'. This is enough to make us entertain serious doubts
about traditional classification in philosophy, and it is but one
example of many. Instances of the concept 'beauty' may very well all
contain an element of ugliness; of the concept 'courage', an element of
fear. It may even be the case that in every instance of any concept
there is an element of opposition to that concept; and this opposition
itself may be an essential characteristic of concepts. Whether or not
that is the case, enough has been shown to prove that the classical
system of classification and division must undergo a radical transform-
ation to fit the needs of philosophical concepts.

The new system of classification must be one which
allows for and explains the existence of overlapping classes in philo-
sophy, and it must be based on the recognition that such overlap may be
a characteristic not merely of a selection, but of every philosophical
concept.

We can draw from all this an immediate practical con-
clusion. No philosopher can afford to ignore the possibility of over-
lap. In all his reflections, he must examine every concept and every
instance of a concept to see whether or not there is an overlap, and if
so what is its character.

On our part, we can best be of assistance to him by
carrying on our reflections on the philosophical concept. We have seen
that the instances of a philosophical concept may overlap. The question
now, is "What is the precise nature of the overlap"? If we can answer

this, we have gone a long way towards providing a new idea of philosophical classification; an idea that the philosopher may carry about in his head to prevent him from falling into the errors which have vitiated the performance of much philosophy in the past. We will have discovered an essential part of our new method.

PART FOUR: THE PHILOSOPHICAL SCALE OF FORMS

We will begin by examining more closely the traditional system of classifying concepts. This system is based equally upon congruence and difference within and between concepts. Wherever there is grouping into classes and sub-classes, this depends on similarities, wherever there is division between classes and sub-classes, this is based upon differences. The similarities and the differences are equally essential to the concept and to its instances; in order for the system to work, the correspondence between concept and instances, in this respect, must be complete.

It is not necessary for our present purposes to consider the notion of essential congruence. The idea of difference, however, is of extreme importance to us. If there is an overlap of classes, as we have seen, and if this overlap may be complete, as has been suggested, then the idea of difference may have to go by the board altogether, and it will certainly require re-interpretation.

DEGREE
AND KIND

There are two kinds of difference, both of which are familiar to us in mathematics, natural science, and common sense. There are differences of kind--as animals differ from

plants, and plane figures from solids. There are differences of degree--as slowness differs from speed, and a short straight line differs from a long one. Classificatory systems of the traditional type may be based on either kind of difference. If they are based on differences of kind the differences between classes may be called 'real' differences; if on difference of degree the divisions may be 'arbitrary'. In the first case, the resulting classificatory system may appropriately be called 'horizontal', and in the latter 'vertical'. Examples: the classification of books in a library, and the classification of income for tax purposes.

DISTINCTION OF DEGREE FROM KIND There are cases in which differences of degree and differences of kind are related to form a peculiar system, neither wholly horizontal nor vertical, but both horizontal and vertical, having the character of steps. H_2O , as heat is increased or decreased by degrees over a period of time, assumes at different levels, different forms. But it must be recognized that the two types of difference are not fused. They are external to each other. The essence of water, a peculiar combination of hydrogen and oxygen, remains the same at different 'levels' of its being. The changes in temperature which bring about these changes in kind, are not part of this essential character of water. Wherever changes of degree and kind are thus brought together in a step-form scale, the two types of change are seen to be related to each other by dependence, but at the same time external to each other. The force by which a cable is brought to its breaking strain is no part of the nature of the cable.

When the concepts of mathematics and the concepts of

science are examined as to differences of degree and kind it is noticed that differences of degree are one thing, and differences of kind another. The concepts of mathematics and the concepts of science are often brought together in such a way that there is a "step-form" scale, in which differences of degree and differences of kind are related, but even in this case they are essentially separate. Further, this separation is itself a case of mutual exclusion of classes, and so it again demonstrates the applicability of traditional logic to science and mathematics. What is the situation in philosophy?

I am forced to choose my example again from the field of ethics, not because this is the only field in which an example can be found, but because the ethical example (used by Collingwood himself) demonstrates particularly well the difficulties inherent in applying traditional interpretations to philosophical subject matter.

The Hedonistic Calculus of Jeremy Bentham is based upon an idea that all pleasures are equally pleasant, differing not in kind but merely in degree--duration, intensity, and so on. The "Summum Bonum", for Bentham, is in principle as measurable as the amount of liquid which can be passed through a conduit of a certain length, and diameter, under a certain amount of pressure.

Now, what can we see about pleasure when we take a good look at it? First of all, Bentham is right in this sense: if we can find pleasures which are the same--which arise from the same activity carried on in the same circumstances--then it follows that if we can pursue these activities more often, or maintain them for a greater length of time, or even find means to intensify them, we will have more

pleasure. Perhaps this is what we ought to do with pleasures which are the same, if there are any such.

If we introspect, however, on all the pleasures that we have experienced, it seems obvious that some are quite different from others. The pleasure of listening to Bach is far different from that of listening to Elvis Presley, assuming that one has the cosmopolitan type of character that would enable him to enjoy both. In fact, the essential character of every pleasure is derived from the particular activity in conjunction with which it is enjoyed, and since every activity differs from every other, even when they are of the same kind, every pleasure so derived is also different.

So far, we have Bentham asserting that pleasure is everywhere the same, and ourselves asserting that pleasures are everywhere different. Is there a meeting ground?

FUSION OF
DEGREE
WITH KIND

Take any two pleasures whatever, and consider them together. If our consideration is careful we will not say that they are absolutely equal. We will say, perhaps, that this is a different pleasure than that, and it gives more pleasure. If a person with a particularly scientific mind objects that one cannot say of two dissimilar things that one is 'more' than the other, we will be stunned by his ignorance of the subject. We will agree that this is the case in science and in mathematics but we will maintain, let us hope, that the pleasure of listening to Bach is not merely different from, but at the same time more pleasant than that of listening to Elvis Presley. If we were then pressed to provide an explanation of what is meant by saying that different pleasures can be

more or less pleasant than each other, we would have to say that one is different because it gives us more pleasure, and it gives us more pleasure because it is different, and that is the end of the matter. We would be asserting, in concrete terms, that in this connection differences of degree and differences of kind are indistinguishable from each other. The differences of degree of which we speak cannot be measured because they are also differences of kind. Yet we know we commit no error when we refer to these subjects in terms which denote degree. Moreover, the differences of kind cannot be described without using such terms.

Pleasure may, of course, be considered as an excitation of certain nerve patterns. That is, it may be considered scientifically. If so, the concept pleasure will be differentiated as to kind depending on the particular nerve patterns which are excited, and as to degree, if that is presently possible, by the amount of excitation. In this case, difference of degree will be extraneous from difference of kind, as in the example quoted above--the states of water. We are concerned, however, with the concept 'pleasure' as it appears to philosophy.

Now, what we have said about pleasure above, may equally be said of the activities from which pleasure arises, when these are philosophically considered. Actions may be considered as to whether they are pleasurable, expedient, right; and, indeed, actions may be measured philosophically against many criteria. In every case, it will be found that differences of degree coalesce with differences of kind in the same way as they have done in the consideration of pleasure. Anything to which the philosophical predicate 'good' is applied will

also exhibit this characteristic fusion of degree with kind.

What about the differences between good and evil, truth and falsity, beauty and ugliness? Are these differences of kind, pure and simple? They are not. It is a commonplace that there is no such thing as absolute, unregenerate evil; no falsehood that does not contain an element of truth, however small; and no ugly thing which is not in some degree beautiful. So considered, ugliness is not merely different from beauty--although common sense tells us that it is that--it is also beauty, but of a very small degree. This type of fusion is signalized, if not recognized, in the common reflections that no pleasure is really worthwhile unless it contains an element of pain; no comedy really good which fails to contain a tragic element.

To draw the conclusion. In philosophy, the species of a genus overlap. Moreover, the difference between species of a philosophical genus is a peculiar fusion of difference of degree with difference of kind. Degree which cannot be quantitatively measured; kind which cannot be arbitrarily distinguished. This new kind of difference precludes the possibility of a clear-cut line of demarcation, either 'real' or 'arbitrary' between the species. Hence, the overlap. It follows that classification in philosophy can be neither horizontal nor vertical; nor can it be a "step-form" combination of the two. It must be an oblique, ascending scale, upon which the forms of the concept to be classified are arranged, each interpenetrating the next so that at no point can we say, for example, "at this point sensual pleasure stops and an esthetic pleasure begins".

Does this amount to saying that there is really no

difference between the specifications of a philosophical concept? Not unless we continue to insist on the traditional method of classification. What we have been trying to demonstrate is not that differentiation is impossible in philosophy, but that it is impossible in philosophy to differentiate as one does in mathematics and science. This is not an abrogation of difference as such, but an argument for a philosophical rationalization of difference. By extension, it is not a call for an end to classification, but it is a program for a new method of classification appropriate to philosophy.

DISTINCTION
AND
OPPOSITION

Before leaving this matter we have to consider another aspect of the relation between adjacent species. That is, whether they are related by distinction or opposition or both. As an example of distinction let us return to the states of water--solid, liquid, and gas. As an example of opposition we may consider the physicist's description of the relation between heat and cold. It is obvious that the three states of water are merely distinct, and not opposed. As for heat and cold; on the physicist's view, cold is merely the absence of heat, as rest is the absence of motion. In these cases, opposition is the relation between a positive quality and its absence, not a relation between two positively opposed qualities. This is the nature of the terms 'distinction' and 'opposition' as they are used outside philosophy. Species which are distinct are just different kinds of things, not of themselves opposed to each other: species which are opposed are not so because they possess different qualities, but merely because one of them lacks a quality which the other possesses.

Again, what is the case in philosophy?

FUSION OF
DISTINCTION
AND OPPOSITION

Let us examine the positions that philosophers have taken on the question of the traditional goods--the

pleasant, the expedient and the right. First of all, these are regarded as distinct. But they are also regarded as distinctions which are at the same time opposed to each other. A philosopher who holds the utilitarian position will regard the egoistic hedonist as not merely different from himself, but as advocating an ethic which is not an ethic--which indeed is opposed to the very essence of moral behaviour. One who seeks his own pleasure is evil, and the moral philosophy which advocates this is the arch enemy of morality, which really lies in the direction of seeking pleasure for others, not for oneself.

But for a philosopher who holds the position that to do one's duty is the highest good, the idea of seeking pleasure, no matter for whom, is quite extraneous to the essential idea of morality: namely, duty. It is not merely extraneous; it is opposed. One who seeks pleasure, whether he be an egoist or a utilitarian, is pursuing evil as opposed to good.⁴

Opposition and distinction, like degree and kind, are peculiarly fused in the specifications of philosophical concepts.

We can not proceed to a statement of the Scale of Forms, such that it will fulfil all of the conditions which we have shown to be characteristic of philosophical concepts. As a matter of fact, the Scale has been receiving exemplification in its details as we went along, and it now remains only to bring the details together. To do

4. Collingwood gives no example of such a philosopher, but he states this position on page 84 of The Essay on Philosophical Method in terms which unmistakeably suggest that there are, or have been, such philosophers. This is why I have "personified" the position.

this, I propose to use a concrete example---an example in which philosophy is again, as it was in what we said of Speculum Mentis, exhibited as reflecting upon other forms of experience as well as upon itself. This will be a scale of the forms of behaviour.

The generic essence of behaviour, as we shall consider it, is that it is adaptative; an active relation by means of which an organism exists in its environment. The specific differentiations within that generic essence are types of organization of behaviour; differences in the relation between organism and environment. First, there is 'tropism', the type of organization of behaviour characteristic of plants and of the forms of animal life without a nervous system. Then, there is instinctive behaviour, the type of organization of behaviour characteristic of animals at a higher level, having nervous systems, but incapable of deliberation. Finally, there is conscious organization of behaviour, which appears to be characteristic of human animals. So far we are within the traditional scheme of classification.

That these forms are different from each other, and that they are distinct, we need not pause to demonstrate. What we have to show, in order to vindicate and exemplify our philosophical scale of forms, is that when these specifications are philosophically considered their differences are differences both of degree and kind at the same time, and that in being distinct from, they are also opposed to each other. We have also to show that they overlap, and we have to describe the nature of the overlap.

An animal whose behaviour is limited to tropisms is

adapting itself to its environment, and thus it partakes of the generic essence. But it is a low form of adaptation, in that the organization of the animal's behaviour is such that it can meet only a few eventualities of the many which may arise in its environment. Moreover, tropistic behaviour is more dependent than any higher kind; it cannot change the environment, nor can it change itself.

Instinctive behaviour supersedes, but does not eliminate, tropistic. Every animal with a nervous system is composed of cells--indeed, the nervous system itself is composed of cells--and the cells are tropistic in their behaviour. Nevertheless, that tropism is a lesser form as well as a different form of organization of behaviour is here convincingly demonstrated. The entire cellular structure is dominated by the strictures of the instincts. The higher form of organization includes the lower within itself. It demonstrates its superiority over the lower on the lower's own ground; a cell which is part of an instinctive organism has a type of existence much superior to the cell which is "on its own".⁵

In the same way, conscious direction of behaviour imparts a new character to behaviour, a character which is not merely different from, but better than the lower types. It is also a character which includes within itself the lower types, superseding but not eliminating them. To see that conscious behaviour beats instinctive behaviour on its own ground; we have only to reflect upon the fact that even the instinctive satisfactions of man are higher than those of

5. I do not use the term 'superior' in a moral or aesthetic sense. I mean that the cell has a superior existence in that it receives the benefits of being part of a whole organism whose actions are organized by the instincts. The "willy-nilly" existence of the tropistic organism is, by comparison, inferior.

beasts precisely because they are organized by his intellect.

As for opposition. It is a commonplace of psychology that conscious behaviour has constantly to assert itself over the instincts, and we need not doubt that at the same time the tropistic behaviour of the cells places demands and prohibitions upon the instincts. Each, in a sense, is trying to assert itself as the dynamism of behaviour and each is attempting to reject the others. But when the lower submits to the higher it finds a greater satisfaction in the submission. Distinction and opposition coalesce here.

We have already noted the matter of inclusion of the lower forms within the higher. Is this overlap? Indeed it is. And it is a type of overlap which can only be understood by means of the fusion of degree and kind, distinction and opposition as outlined above. Every part of the human organism is composed of cells, all of which function tropistically. Thus in every act of consciousness there is a tropistic element--as well as an element of instinct. The three can only be distinguished from each other as specifications on a scale of forms.

Let us add another term to the scale. When we spoke of conscious behaviour, we were thinking of the consciousness as directing actions. Suppose we now consider a type of behaviour in which consciousness reflects upon and directs consciousness. Such a type of behaviour would stand above the type in which consciousness, without reflecting upon itself, organizes the actions of the human organism--what we may call 'mere' conscious behaviour. Moreover, since mere conscious behaviour sums up all the forms below itself, the new form--self-conscious

behaviour--would stand upon the pinnacle.

What is consciousness of consciousness, but thinking about thought? Hence, the highest form of behaviour is that directed by philosophy--it brings about the ultimate refinement of action, and the ultimate adjustment of organism to environment, and of environment to organism. Only money is lacking to the philosopher. He has everything else.

PART FIVE: FURTHER CONSEQUENCES OF THE METHOD OUTLINED

The foregoing parts have been an exposition of the nature of philosophical concepts, and of the fundamentals of philosophical method as derived from the nature of concepts. If we accept Collingwood's view, it must be because we agree with him that it is natural for the concepts of philosophy to overlap in a certain way, and that the methodological principles of philosophy must take that overlap into account. We are agreeing on two things. First, that the method of philosophy (and, indeed, any method) has to correspond with the nature of the object upon which it is employed. Second, that the account of overlap given by the Scale of Forms is a correct account of the nature of philosophical concepts. It follows from this that we accept his methodological injunctions, as far as we have gone.

If we agree this far, we can proceed to examine some further injunctions which Collingwood has laid upon philosophers, as consequences of the Overlap of Classes and the Scale of Forms. The first of these is a "definition of definition", as it ought to be practised in philosophy.

DEFINITION According to traditional logic, to define a concept is to classify it. The two steps in classification--the determination of the generic essence of the concepts, followed by the determination of its specific differentiations--are paralleled by two equivalent steps in definition. A definition should state the generic essence and the specific differentiations, if any.

The geometrical definition--an equilateral triangle is a plane figure in which an area is enclosed by three straight lines, equal in length and including equal angles at the points of their intersection--conforms to the traditional precept. In it, the essence of triangularity as such is given, and as well there is a statement of what differentiates equilateral triangles from triangles in general. This is definition "by genus and differentia". Moreover, this definition contains other such definitions within itself: for example, the term 'plane figure' is also a traditional definition, as is the term 'straight lines'.

This notion of the process of definition is so common that it is difficult to think of definition employing any other method.

It is best, however, not to restrict the term 'definition' to activities of this kind until we have examined a different tendency.

DESCRIPTION There is another sense in which the term 'definition' may be used. There are sometimes objects which we feel it necessary to define, but whose essence cannot easily be determined and compassed within a brief statement. Such objects are defined by being described. The definition, when it is as complete as it can be

made, consists not of a brief statement of genus and differentia, but of a more or less lengthy enumeration of the attributes of the object.

If we now restrict the term 'definition' to that process which is derived from the system of classification, and use the term 'description' for the process described in the preceding paragraph, then we can go on to say that definition is proper to mathematics, and description to natural science.

Definition seems to have the advantage over description that it is exact and final, whereas description may appear relatively unclear, indistinct, and incomplete. Moreover, in definition there are logical connections between the statement of the essence of a triangle and the properties of a triangle, such that the latter can be deduced from the former. Description, on the other hand, exists because of the lack of such connections within its subject matter, so that if one could state the essence of man--and this has been attempted--it is impossible to deduce the properties of men from that statement of the essence.

All this is true, but it is the outward expression of more fundamental truth. Definitions are concerned with entities which are abstract mental creations, really creatures of the mind, and it is this which gives them their logical character and which make them amenable to treatment by deductive inference. Descriptions are concerned with objects in the material world. If these objects are informed by logical connections at all, the connections are not apparent. Hence descriptions cannot be products of thought primarily, but products of observation. This accounts for the difference between the definitions of mathematics and the descriptions of science.

FUSION OF
DEFINITION AND
DESCRIPTION

Now, it seems clear from what we have said of the inapplicability of traditional classification to philosophical concepts, that definition by genus and differentia cannot be part of philosophical method. Does this mean that philosophical definition will be merely empirical description? No, because the philosophical concept is informed with logical connections. For these reasons, philosophical definition can be neither a mere enumeration of attributes as it is in science, nor a mere statement of essence as it is in mathematics. If it were the former, the logical connections would be overlooked; and if it were the latter, the characteristic overlap of classes would be denied. Philosophical definition, therefore, must partake of the nature of both.

Like a mathematical definition, a philosophical definition will expose the interior logical connections of the concept, and it must satisfy the test of inner consistency. But, like a scientific description, a philosophical definition must be a statement--as complete as can be made--of the attributes of the concept. This will give insurance against overlooking the instances of overlap which are sure to be present in every philosophical concept. A philosophical definition, then, must not only be consistent within itself, but it must also correspond to our experience of the concept.

Here it must be noted that our experience of philosophical concepts is not of the same order as our experience of material objects. Our experience of philosophical concepts is our experience of our thoughts about them. The fact that some of our thoughts about a concept may have entered our minds from minds other than our own makes

no difference to this, because if we have not made them our own, we cannot include them in definitions.

JUDGMENTS: Whenever we make assertions about concepts we do so by
UNIVERSAL, including the concept in a judgment. Thus, if we assert
PARTICULAR, that honesty is the best policy, we are asserting a
AND SINGULAR relationship of identity between two concepts. So far in this descrip-
tion of the method of philosophy we have been basing ourselves on the
newly discovered nature of the philosophical concept in itself. We have
yet to consider the consequences of this "new-style" concept for the
judgments of philosophy.

First, the judgments of philosophy, like any other judgments, can be either universal, particular, or singular, depending on whether they refer to all the instances of a concept, or to a specific kind of instance, or to one individual instance. It is obvious that the universal overlaps the particular and the singular, since it includes them. "All men are mortal" means that every kind of man is mortal, and, alas, that you and I are mortal.

Mathematics, science, and philosophy all aim at making judgments that are universal. Formally, the main judgments of all three branches of thought are universal. Actually, only those of mathematics achieve, or appear to achieve, true universality. Those of science cannot be verified for all instances of the concept, and those of philosophy, as they are concerned with constantly changing conceptions, can never be absolute. Yet all necessarily aim at universality, and in the case of science and philosophy they adopt the universal form although they appear to lack the content.

If mathematics possesses universality at the outset, because of its 'a priori' nature, and can proceed by deduction to the particular and the singular judgments, then it appears that in science and philosophy the process must be reversed. It must be a process by which universality is built up out of particular and singular elements. In empirical science this appearance is justified. From observations of individual instances, and particular kinds of instances, the scientist proceeds to his universal abstractions, but because he can never observe all instances scientific universality is never absolute.

This is similar to the situation outlined in the paragraphs above on definition. The "logicality" of the subject matter of mathematics makes universality possible, while the materiality of the subject matter of science makes universality impossible.

The problem of philosophical universality is resolved in a manner analogous to that in which the problem of philosophical definition was solved. The philosophical judgment can be universal because it is possible, ideally possible, to proceed to the outer limits of philosophy by logical inference. At the same time, the philosophical judgment, like the scientific and unlike the mathematical, depends upon accurate observation of particular and individual instances of philosophical concepts. But since all these observations are observations of thought itself, they must conform to logical necessities. In other words, they must fit into the system of universal judgments which is philosophy.

JUDGMENTS:	There is a type of judgment in which a concept is
AFFIRMATION	
AND NEGATION	affirmed or denied. Traditional logic, mathematics,

science and philosophy all agree that affirmation and denial overlap. Every affirmation of a certain state of affairs is at the same time a denial of any and all states of affairs incompatible with that affirmed. Similarly denial implies affirmation. In science and mathematics, however, the element of denial in an affirmative judgment is indiscriminate, as is the element of affirmation in a negative judgment.

This is a consequence of the traditional formula for classification as applied in science and mathematics. For, if it is affirmed that any concept belongs to a certain genus, or to a certain class within a genus, this implies that it cannot belong to any other genus or species. Denial is thus indiscriminate. Similarly if a judgment denies that a concept belongs to a certain species, then the possibility is left open that it may belong to any other. Affirmation is indiscriminate.

Philosophical concepts are arranged on a scale of forms. Each higher form, as we have seen, sums up the positive content of all the lower ones, and at the same time rejects the erroneous claims of the lower forms that they are the complete embodiment of the generic essence. It follows that in affirming a philosophical concept--one of the forms upon the scale--the philosopher denies, not just any concept, but the one immediately below. This is the one which sums up all error. Conversely, the denial of any concept is at the same time an affirmation of the particular concept next above the one denied. We must conclude therefore that in philosophy only, any particular affirmation involves and includes a particular denial, and vice versa.

Suppose it is objected that a philosopher can affirm

or deny whatever he pleases. The answer is that if he is truly a philosopher, he cannot. He will be bound by the nature of the Scale of Forms upon which philosophical concepts are articulated, just as a scientist is bound by the nature of objective fact. The philosopher will naturally affirm the highest form of the concept that he knows, and because this highest form is bound by logical connections to the one next below it, he will, if he perceives the connections, deny that.

JUDGMENTS: Judgments may also be considered in the relation they
HYPOTHETICAL have to the objects they affirm or deny. If they refer
AND
CATEGORICAL to states of affairs which actually exist, they are said
to be categorical. Here the term 'categorical' is not used in its
legislative sense, as it was used by Kant, but in the sense that the
object of a categorical judgment actually exists. The hypothetical
judgment is distinct from the categorical in being a supposition that a
certain state of affairs exists.

We have already seen that the body of science consists of hypothetical judgments. They have often the appearance of being categorical, but never the substance. The scientist is concerned with the construction of a framework which will explain the observed facts. But the framework which he constructs can never be verified by being seen as the facts themselves are seen. Moreover, the theoretical frameworks which science upholds today will certainly be modified, and may be destroyed, by new discoveries made tomorrow. Thus, while the particular observations of science may be recorded in categorical statements, the theories by which these observations are explained-- and these are the essence of science--ought always to be stated as

hypothetical, because that is what they are.

That the same is true of mathematics requires little demonstration. Is there such a thing as a straight line in the world? Or a perfect curve? We believe that there is not; and even if there were, we could have no way of knowing it. This is because of the limitations both of sensible objects and of the senses. The perfection of mathematical entities--circles and the like--and the certainty with which we can perform deductions from their essences, lies in the fact that they are creatures of the mind. In a word, hypotheses.

But philosophy is different. What philosophy is concerned with is thought. In being concerned with thought, philosophy does not extend itself to the assertion that the object of thought exists. It contents itself with the assertion that thought itself exists. And by thinking, philosophy brings thought into existence.

Thought is the only type of thing which as a subject can be its own object, and since philosophy is really thinking about thought it constitutes its own object by existing itself. This is why the judgments of philosophy alone can be and are categorical.

All the foregoing characteristics of philosophical thinking have been stated in abstract terms. In order to demonstrate that philosophical definition is also description; that the judgments of philosophy are equally based on deduction from universals and inductive observations of instances; that the philosophical affirmation always implies a concrete rather than an indiscriminate denial; and that the judgments of philosophy are essentially categorical, let us take an example and follow it through.

SUMMARY AND
EXAMPLE

Suppose that we are concerned with the concept "knowledge". This cannot be defined by saying that it is a relation between the mind and the world, because this obscures all sorts of distinctions between different types of relations. If we say it is a 'cognitive' relation, we are inserting a term which may be equivalent to the concept we wished to define in the beginning; therefore we are no closer than before. Moreover, other questions naturally arise from the definition, which demand answers. What is mind? What is the world? These concepts overlap as we have seen.

This is enough to demonstrate that the definition of 'knowledge', to be as complete as we can make it, involves a description of all sorts of instances which, by common consent, contain an element of knowledge. It involves as well, a description of the process by which I, as an individual, come to gain any individual 'item' of knowledge. This sort of definition cannot be contained in any statement of genus and differentia.

But if it is a description it is not like the descriptions of science--an aggregate of parts. Every new element in the description must be incorporated into the whole in such a way that it becomes part of the logical framework which we are trying to build up by the process of definition. In other words, the criteria by which the elements of our definition are accepted or rejected, is not merely correspondence with our experience of 'knowledge', but also coherence with the systematic definition which has already been built up.

In saying the above, we are also demonstrating that the universal judgments which form the body of the definitive description

of 'knowledge' are not only related by logical implication, as the universals of mathematics are related to their instances, but also by observation, as the universals of science are related to the facts from which they are derived. The instances, of course, are instances of 'knowledge': they are thoughts, and as thoughts they are related by implication.

Now, when Plato and Descartes affirm that true knowledge is clear and distinct, they are not issuing an indiscriminate denial that it is anything else but clear and distinct. They are concretely denying that it is opinion. They are distinguishing it from mere opinion, and arguing that it is opposed to opinion. Why? Because opinion is the form on the scale below knowledge. The man who holds an opinion believes that it is knowledge--clear and distinct. He is thus the inveterate enemy of the true philosopher, whose aim it is above all to disabuse the opinionated man of this false conception.

There may be those who do not rise to the point where they even hold opinions. These are prisoners of the mere flux of sensation, and they occupy the position below opinion on the scale. It is not necessary for the philosopher to attack these, because his attack on opinion includes the attack on mere sensation as a form of knowledge.

Finally, in asserting that knowledge must be clear and distinct, and in making his own thought conform to that definition, the philosopher is at the same time asserting the essential characteristic of knowledge, and bringing that essence into existence. Hence his assertion is categorical.

METHOD: Perhaps before leaving Collingwood's philosophical method
INDUCTIVE AND
DEDUCTIVE something explicit ought to be said on deduction and induction, although certain consequences for deduction and induction in philosophy are implicit in what has gone before.

Mathematics is a deductive science, in that its instances are deduced from 'a priori' hypothetical essences. Empirical science is inductive, in that it arrives at its hypotheses by induction from instances. Philosophy is both deductive and inductive. It is deductive because philosophical knowledge is informed by logical connections, so that we can arrive at new philosophical knowledge by drawing inferences and implications from the old. It is inductive because philosophical knowledge is also derived from reflection on our experience of thought. Moreover, in philosophy it is difficult to distinguish what is deductive from what is inductive; the two processes appear to be fused into one.

Take this syllogism: Any form of true knowledge is clear and distinct; mathematical knowledge is clear and distinct; therefore mathematical knowledge is a form of true knowledge. This syllogism would probably be acceptable to many philosophers. But is it based on deduction from the essential character of knowledge to the special characteristics of mathematical knowledge, or is it based, really, on induction from the special character of mathematical knowledge to the essential definition? The form indicates that it is the former, but might it not actually be the latter? The fact is that it is an instance of the fusion of deduction and induction in philosophy. Whether the premisses and the conclusion are true or not, we need not pause to ask.

These then are the characteristics of philosophical method as expounded in the Essay on Philosophical Method. In the following chapters, an attempt will be made to answer a number of questions which arise from this. Is this method applied in Collingwood's other philosophical works, and if so what are the consequences? Is there more to Collingwood's method than he explicitly expounds, and if so what is it? Finally, "Is the method valuable"?

CHAPTER VI
LATER PHILOSOPHICAL WORKS

In Speculum Mentis and the Essay on Philosophical Method Collingwood exhibits philosophy in two ways. First, as an organizing principle making explicit the relationships between other bodies of thought and the relation of the other bodies to philosophy itself. Second, he describes the inner nature of philosophy as an activity of thought with a method proper to itself. The later books can be viewed as an outgrowth of the philosophy depicted in these two.

The schematism which was presented in outline in Speculum Mentis is preserved in the later books. In the Essay on Philosophical Method what has been said of philosophy as such in Speculum Mentis is further developed. In The Idea of Nature, the meaning of science is given a more detailed exposition. The Idea of History deals specifically and in detail with history, and The Principles of Art does the same for art. The Essay on Metaphysics may be regarded as at the same time a treatment of a special branch of philosophy and as a further explication of science, since in it the metaphysician is given the task of studying the absolute presuppositions of science.

It is hard to escape the idea that the remainder of Collingwood's works after Speculum Mentis were designed to further qualify and interpret the outline given in that book. And there is also a sense in which the Essay on Philosophical Method is connected with all the later books. Since these are philosophical works, it seems reasonable to suppose that in them Collingwood will employ the method that he has expounded. If he does so, the later books may be regarded as attempts to justify that method.

This presupposes that in the interim between thinking out the schematism and the method Collingwood remained of the same mind. If he did not do so, there are two possibilities--either that he changed his mind completely, or that he discovered new implications in philosophy of which he had not hitherto been aware. In either case, we would have to ask ourselves what are the reasons for and the consequences of the modification.

I am going to contend in this chapter that Collingwood, as far as the system of philosophy is concerned, remained generally of the same mind; and that for the most part what he has to say about art, science, and history in later works is merely a further and more expanded treatment of the schematism outlined in Speculum Mentis. With respect to method, I shall argue that Collingwood often saw fit to employ other methods not expounded in the Essay. As for the question whether these new methodological principles are consistent with the rest of Collingwood's philosophy, I shall leave the attempt to answer that question until I come to a general estimation of Collingwood's thought, at which time I shall take up the whole question of the consistency of Collingwood's method with the substance of his philosophy.

ART

In The Principles of Art Collingwood makes a definition--

as he says "coextensive with this entire book"--of the nature of art as such. He proceeds by successive limitations of the term art, to exclude all that calls itself art but is not. Finally he arrives at the conclusion that Art as such is "the expression of emotion". That, according to Collingwood, is absolutely all it is. To express his emotions the artist does not need to have an audience. He

may have to create works of art, but if he does so, he does it merely to help himself express his emotions to himself, not because he wishes to express them to anyone else, or to influence anyone else. From the artist's point of view, the audience's participation in his aesthetic experience is quite extraneous to his expression of it. If they do participate, it is only because they have the same emotions which also become expressed in the course of feeling the impact of the work of art.

Furthermore, although every expression of emotion has some object, that object is no more a part of the expression than is the work of art which may result from it. Art is concerned solely with expression of emotions, neither with the objects in conjunction with which emotions arise, nor with the works of art which assist the artist in his expression.

Milton's Paradise Lost is a work of art, and a great one. In writing it, Milton has an ostensible object--the ways of God--which he said he would attempt to justify. But neither Paradise Lost as a printed poem, nor the ways of God as an object are part of Art as such. What is really Art is Milton's organization of his emotions as he writes, and if we experience this same organization of emotions, then, and only then, are we really appreciating Milton as an artist. When Milton depicts the character of Satan, his feelings speak to us more strongly than at any other time. Is this because he is at this point more than any other justifying the ways of God to man? No, it is because at this point he had forgotten his stated purpose and was really expressing his emotions.

Is this idea of Art consistent with that put forward in

Speculum Mentis? It is. True art rises from a peculiar conjunction of the artistic sensitivity with some objective situation, but art is not concerned with the object. It rejects the object in favor of the organization of the emotions themselves. This is accomplished by expressing them.

SCIENCE The Idea of Nature and the Essay on Metaphysics we can consider together, since both are concerned with science. In the first of these books Collingwood develops the idea that the theoretical frameworks which science constructs are abstract and hypothetical, and that they can never lead to certain knowledge about the world. The best that they can attain is a relatively high degree of probability. This is a good thing, and the abstractions of science can be justified by saying that they are productive; but being productive is not the same thing as being true. "That which is not certain, cannot be certainly true."

As a result of this, Collingwood counsels scientists⁴ to go ahead with their work, but to abandon the notion that in doing so, and in producing results, they are proving that the nature of the world corresponds to the abstract hypotheses that scientists construct. In support of this position he refers to A. N. Whitehead, who agrees that science cannot demonstrate the truth of its hypotheses, and concludes that the scientific idea of a material world which operates according to law is itself an abstraction. Further, it is an abstraction that may not be maintained much longer, as the recent discoveries of physics have demonstrated that there is an increasing element of contingency in what science has observed to be governed by law.

Collingwood is then able to add that the theoretical constructions of science are indeed abstractions, and that they are abstractions not from the real nature of the world, but from the real nature of the mind. The abstractions of science are a means by which the mind comes to know itself as in a mirror. Speculum Mentis is re-affirmed.

In the Essay on Metaphysics, Collingwood describes more fully the precise character of the abstractions which form the corpus of any and all sciences, and shows why it is true to say that scientific knowledge is really knowledge of the mind itself.

Every science, and every scientific endeavour rests on some presuppositions. The fundamental, absolute presupposition of all science, and the one from which all other presuppositions are derived, is the Principle of the Uniformity of Nature. This may be stated by saying that what we discover as a law today, we shall expect will still be a law tomorrow. It may be stated in more basic terms by saying that the material world exists and operates according to law.

We have already seen that this principle cannot be justified by reference to objective facts, since the law cannot be seen in them, since they are evanescent, undergoing constant change and development. Moreover, as we have said above, the recent discoveries of physics have demonstrated that the change and development of objective facts may be at bottom contingent, rather than conformable to law.

If that is the case, what is the reason for having the Principle of the Uniformity of Nature? It cannot exist without reason. The answer is that this absolute presupposition of all science is derived

from the mind's own inner resources, and its nature is determined by the nature of the mind.

The mind has purposes. That, we know. And these purposes of the mind are projected, by means of the Principle of the Uniformity of Nature, upon the external world. By extension, all the knowledge which is derived by employing the Principle must conform to the nature of the Principle: it must conform to the nature of the mind. Therefore, what scientists sometimes call knowledge of the external world is really knowledge of the mind itself. The mind creates the fiction of the external world by means of the absolute presuppositions of science, and by so doing, it comes to know its own nature.

We must insert here the proviso that it comes to know its own nature as a mirror reflection, distorted because the mirror reflection is thought to be the object reflected. Philosophy, by recognizing the error of science, removed the distortion.

Again, Speculum Mentis is re-affirmed.

HISTORY

We come now to the matter of Collingwood's later conception of history--that is, his conception of history after the schematism of Speculum Mentis was put forward. This has been the subject of some difference of opinion. T. M. Knox, as previously noted, believes that in his later works (Knox refers to the Essay on Metaphysics, The Idea of History, and the Autobiography) Collingwood became a 'historicist' and ceased to be a philosopher. E. W. F. Tomlin, another student of Collingwood, agrees that Collingwood's ideas about history underwent change, but appears to think that this change was not inconsistent with the rest of Collingwood's philosophy.⁶

6. Tomlin, E.W.F.; R. G. Collingwood; No. 42 in the series "Writers and Their Work"; published for The British Council and the National Book League by Longmans, Green & Co.; London; 1953; 39 pp.

It is not a major problem of this thesis to choose one or the other conflicting points of view, or to rationalize both of them by another. But we will consider as briefly as possible the definition of history which Collingwood provides in The Idea of History, to see what justification can be found there for the assertion that Collingwood "turned traitor" to philosophy because of a preference for history, or for Tomlin's assertion that in The Idea of History Collingwood achieves a consistent 'rapprochement' between philosophy and history.

History, according to Collingwood, is the study of the past actions of man. Not merely past actions, but past actions as they are evidence of man's thought. In other words, there is in human history two levels of experience; ideas and actions. The latter are determined by the former. By studying past actions, we can infer the thoughts from which these actions have arisen. How can we do this?

Every action is taken in order to solve some felt problem. The problem always poses itself to the agent in the form of a question: what must be done to win the Battle of Trafalgar, given the circumstances in which I now find myself--so might Nelson question himself. He solves the problem by reflecting on the circumstances, by choosing a course of action, and by putting it into effect.

It may be the case that we have no direct evidence of what Nelson thought. How he saw the problem, the considerations that influenced his choice of a certain course of action--these things we cannot know directly. Certainly, in most cases, the thoughts of historical figures are hidden behind their actions. But it is the thoughts and not the actions that are important to the true historian. So, to

discover the thoughts behind the actions is his problem.

This is not so difficult as it may appear. At least, it is not impossible. We have the evidence, documentary and otherwise, of the state of affairs which gave rise to the action. We have similar evidence as to the action taken to solve the problem. By careful sifting of evidence, by questioning the available documents, by examining the statements of authorities as to consistency amongst themselves and correspondence with other evidence, by doing all these things we can become familiar ourselves with the problem and the action taken to solve it. We can thus think our way into the mind of the historical agent, re-thinking his thoughts. This is the essence of history.

What is its value to us? Thought develops historically, conditioning actions as it develops. Contemporary thought has developed out of the thought of the past. Accordingly, if we wish "to know our own minds" we must know history, for one cannot know, really know, what mind is, if one does not follow its historical development. This is the reason why, for Collingwood, history is "the self-knowledge of mind".

It is easy to see why E. W. F. Tomlin describes this as a 'rapprochement' of philosophy with history. Collingwood has always maintained that the object of all knowledge is the mind itself, and that this knowledge is most fully attained by philosophy. Now he is saying, so it appears, the same thing about history. This looks like a 'rapprochement'.

Is it 'historicism', as T. M. Knox suggests, and a reversion from the philosophy which Collingwood earlier expounded--especially in the Essay on Philosophical Method? First, what does Knox

mean by historicism?

He means that Collingwood has made all thought, including philosophy, subject to historical development and philosophy, therefore, merely a part of history. This, according to Knox, contradicts the idea that philosophy can reflect upon the theory of other bodies of thought, and upon its own past theory to describe errors therein and to correct them. For, says Knox, if philosophical thought is conditioned by historical circumstances, then any given philosopher can think no other way than he does, and it is pointless to criticize him. For the historical Collingwood there can be no such thing as criticizing and correcting false methods applied in philosophy or anywhere else. This is what Knox means by saying that Collingwood's preoccupation with history made him "turn traitor" to philosophy.

I doubt if Knox's criticism is justified. In making it he has quoted unpublished papers of Collingwood's to which few, if any other philosophers have access. Certainly I have not, and I cannot therefore be as certain of the justice either of Knox's criticism of Collingwood, or of my own criticism of Knox, as I might be if I could examine all the available evidence. I base what I have to say on what I have read of Collingwood on both history and philosophy, and on what Knox has to say on what I have read.

It seems to me that Knox misinterprets Collingwood in saying that he was a historicist; that, for the later Collingwood, philosophical thought was conditioned by historical circumstances. I believe that Collingwood always meant the reverse--that historical circumstances were conditioned by thoughts, among them philosophical

thoughts. If this is correct, it is still possible for the philosopher to criticize false philosophical and other theoretical formulations; indeed, this is how the historical development of philosophy proceeds. Plato may have been able to think no other way than he did, but this did not prevent Aristotle from criticizing Plato, and later philosophers from criticizing Aristotle--and so on up to the present and on into the future.

It is true that Collingwood appears to incorporate either history into philosophy, or the reverse, by asserting that both history and philosophy are processes "by which the mind comes to know itself". But if Mr. Knox has read Speculum Mentis, he ought to have noticed that Collingwood had earlier said the same thing of science, religion, and art.

I believe that Collingwood, if brought face to face with Knox's criticism, might say something like this: "Yes, history is the self knowledge of mind, but it is the self knowledge of mind as it is concerned with solving practical problems by means of practical actions. Philosophy is also the self knowledge of mind, but it is the self knowledge of mind as it is concerned not merely with thinking out the solutions to practical problems, but with thinking about the nature of thought as such." The distinction between history and philosophy, on this view, is that in history we come to know the practical mind, that which determines historical actions; in philosophy, we come to know the theoretical mind, the mind that reflects upon its own nature. History as such, is still guilty of the same necessary error as Collingwood described in Speculum Mentis--it asserts the existence of an

external world which is the theatre of action. Philosophy surpasses history by eliminating this error.

This view which I have attributed to Collingwood in opposition to Knox, is the only view which is consistent with Collingwood's general philosophical system. The evidence which Knox presents to show that Collingwood is inconsistent is not, to me, conclusive. If Knox had been correct in the view of history that he attributes to Collingwood, then The Idea of History ought to have been a history book. It is not. It is what Collingwood says it is--a book on the philosophy of history, just as The Idea of Nature is a book on the philosophy of science.

So, far from retreating from his earlier definition of philosophy, Collingwood is here pursuing the same purpose that he had laid down in Speculum Mentis. He is using philosophy to reflect on the nature of history, to give the historian a better idea of what he is doing and what he ought to do.

NEW PRINCIPLES OF METHOD At the beginning of this chapter I asserted that Collingwood did not always employ in other books the method he expounded in the Essay on Philosophical Method. I must now justify that assertion.

I am not going to contend at this point that he failed to employ the method that he expounded in the Essay (the place for such a contention would be in the general criticism of Collingwood's philosophy) but that he employed additional methods which, for some reason or other, he left out of the Essay on Philosophical Method.

MAKING THE
IMPLICIT
EXPLICIT

The first of these I will call the Doctrine of Explication. The term 'explication ' is used to denote an activity of making explicit something which is implicit in a certain concept, or in a certain judgment, or in a complex of judgments--for example, a philosophy.

This activity is a fundamental characteristic of philosophy according to Collingwood, and it arises from the very nature of philosophical knowledge. Collingwood agrees with Socrates that philosophical knowledge can only be found within the mind, and that coming to know something is essentially a process of drawing out knowledge from the mind rather than pouring it in. Everyone, Collingwood would say, has an idea of every philosophical concept, but it is an idea which is like crude ore--unrefined. It can only be refined by reflecting upon it, and by recognizing and making explicit the implications that the crude statement contains. This process is essential to philosophy; it is the process by which philosophy develops from one stage upon the Scale of Forms to the next. By making explicit what is implicit we proceed from lower forms of philosophy to higher forms; from a knowledge which, in a sense, we had without knowing it, to a knowledge which is more fully known.

It follows that the proponent of the higher form of philosophy may by means of exposing implications disabuse the proponents of the lower form. This accounts for the nature of much of Collingwood's work. His attack against the critical school of philosophy consists in showing that criticism implies a positive standpoint, while the critical philosophers had denied having such a standpoint,

maintaining that the whole substance of philosophy ought to be critical. Similarly, Collingwood's attack on analytical philosophy (logical positivism) consisted in the demonstration that analyzing one set of propositions so that you get another set which embodies the true meaning of the first, depends upon having still another set of positive principles according to which such analysis shall proceed. The analytic philosophers, according to Collingwood, denied possessing such a set of principles. In exposing these implications, Collingwood hoped to set the feet of these philosophers upon the path of righteousness.

QUESTION

Secondly, there is the Logic of Question and Answer.

AND ANSWER

This Collingwood first stated in Speculum Mentis, and he re-affirmed the statement in several succeeding books, including the Autobiography, in which he makes a great point of it. Strangely, however, he makes no mention of it when he expounds the true method of philosophy in the Essay.

Collingwood describes questioning as "the cutting edge of knowledge", and by this he means that we can gain real knowledge only by asking discriminating questions and by seeking out the answers which satisfy these questions. This is distinct from an opinion, quite commonly held, that in attempting to gain knowledge we are embarking on a "voyage of discovery" without knowing exactly what it is that we want to discover.

It appears that Collingwood believes that every branch of knowledge would profit by recognizing this characteristic of the process by which knowledge is, or ought to be, achieved. He asserts that in his own historical, as well as his philosophical studies, he

has employed it. He even goes so far as to suggest that it is a characteristic of the process of criminal detection. The archaeologist, according to Collingwood, ought not to say "Let us dig a hole here, and see what we will find"; he ought to dig his holes in such places and in such ways that he will provide the answers to certain concrete questions. Collingwood, who was an archaeologist as well as a philosopher, says that he employed this method; and if he did, that the results were fruitful is attested by the place he enjoys among the archaeological students of Roman Britain.

Scientists, of course, apply the logic of "question and answer" whenever they construct hypotheses--because hypotheses are really questions; direct questions which demand a certain type of answer.

Perhaps the reason that Collingwood did not include the logic of "question and answer" in the Essay on Philosophical Method is that it is not a method peculiar to philosophy. However that may be, it is a method which philosophers ought to use--on this point Collingwood is quite clear.

How is the logic of "question and answer" incorporated into Collingwood's general philosophical system? By means of presuppositions. By pre-supposing that the actual state of affairs will conform to a certain idea we have of it, we put ourselves in a position where we can ask pointed questions. Does the state of affairs conform to this idea? The answer to this question may be negative, and if so we are thrown back upon another pre-supposition. If the answer is positive, we advance to another pre-supposition based upon the knowledge derived by the first.

We have already seen that pre-suppositions are produced by "the mind's own inner resources", and that they determine the nature of the knowledge derived, making it conformable to the nature of the mind. The re-interpretation of the idea of pre-suppositions in the logic of question and answer makes no difference to this fact.

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This completes the exposition and exemplification of Collingwood's philosophy. That is, saving errors and unintentional omissions, the exposition is complete enough for the purposes of this thesis. The time has come for evaluation and criticism, and this will begin with the succeeding chapter.

CHAPTER VII

CRITICISM AND EVALUATION

Before proceeding to criticize and evaluate Collingwood's philosophy, there are two aspects of the foregoing exposition that I will attempt to justify: its length and its abstractness. This justification ought not to be mistaken for an apology. Perhaps an apology is also required; if so, the reader can take for granted that it has been made in the admission that it may be required.

I have attempted to state the essence of Collingwood's philosophy in the preceding six chapters. This undertaking may appear ambitious. Certainly, in Collingwood's own view, it would appear, not merely ambitious, but impossible. Nevertheless, I have undertaken it, and it is up to me to justify it if I can.

First of all, the attempt is necessary, because Collingwood did not state the essence of his philosophy himself. He was too much taken up with the solution of the particular problems facing contemporary thinkers to spend his time setting forth, definitively and completely, his own system of thought. Perhaps he was right in leaving this task unperformed. Certainly, contemporary thinkers do have problems, and if Collingwood had solutions for these, he might have regarded himself as immoral had he not set them forth.

He did not, of course, entirely neglect the task of explaining the fundamental position which underlay his practical philosophical thought. In Speculum Mentis and the Essay on Philosophical Method, he gave us enough to go on. The rest that we need to know about him can be gained by tracking down implications. This is what I have tried to do; or at least, to get a start on. It is not for me to

comment on the degree of success I have achieved in the attempt.

I have an opinion also, that while Collingwood (being dead) is now beginning to gain a certain degree of recognition, he merits a greater degree. If my exposition contributes anything, however small, to the understanding of Collingwood, this will justify it.

Again, any philosopher, even if his ideas were execrable--and I think Collingwood's are not--deserves to be understood before being criticized. In Collingwood's case at least, this condition demands a considerable exposition.

There are portions of this thesis which, in spite of my unabated efforts to remove this fault, remain abstract. With respect to this, I can only say that Collingwood's own statements are abstract; where he gives examples, these too are often abstract. Abstractness ^{or} seems to be a characteristic of his philosophy, if not of philosophy in general. I must admit that I have tried to improve on Collingwood in this respect by giving examples of my own construction. I have done this with misgivings because what I really wanted to do was to expound Collingwood, and there is a danger that in substituting my examples for his, or in creating my own examples, I may have misinterpreted his thought. I don't think I have done this, but attention ought to be called to the possibility.

GENERAL
ERROR

I will now proceed to fulfil the duty of criticism. My main contention is that it is Collingwood, not the scientists, who inverts knowledge by mistaking the "mirror image" for the reality. However, just as Collingwood admits that in spite of the necessary error of supposing the material world to exist, still science

has value, I will contend that in spite of his unnecessary and erroneous supposition that the material world does not exist, still Collingwood's philosophy has value.

Collingwood asserts that all knowledge is knowledge of the mind; but I assert that all knowledge is knowledge of the material world, and of minds as a part of that world, having special characteristics of their own. This, I believe, is the only interpretation of the relation between mind and the world which satisfactorily explains the distinction between subject and object. This is a distinction which, in many forms, plagued Collingwood from beginning to end of his philosophy, and one which he was never able to explain. One, indeed, which he had cut off the possibility of explaining by saying that the proper object of knowledge is the mind itself. If this is true, the mind is both subject and object, and the distinctions which Collingwood does make between subject and object must always have a hollow ring.

What can he mean by saying that the mind must necessarily project the material world in order to know itself? Why should it? This, Collingwood does not explain. The whole complex structure of modern science becomes a fiction for which no reason is given. Yet this is one of the central points of Collingwood's philosophy, and it ought to be better substantiated than it is.

What becomes of the Logic of Question and Answer? If the object of knowledge is mind, then the mind has all the answers. Why does it have to ask the questions?

Again, what is the necessity for the absolute pre-suppositions upon which scientific hypothesis and investigation is based?

If the whole material world is a fiction, which is somehow produced by the mind, why bother with this fiction? Why not concentrate upon the mind itself. It seems that in supposing the material world, the mind puts itself to unnecessary trouble.

This is the conclusion that Collingwood ought to reach. If all knowledge is knowledge of the mind, then by all means let us study the mind itself. Let us think about thought itself. This is the task of philosophy, and there is no good reason in Collingwood why philosophy ought not to be the repository of all knowledge, and not merely its highest form. In his continual consideration, in various forms, of the distinction between subject and object, the mind and the material world, Collingwood has introduced an adder into the bosom of his philosophy. Fortunately his philosophy escapes the fate of Cleopatra, and something more is left than a beautiful corpse.

There are a number of specific errors which arise from, and exemplify this general error within his philosophy. I will deal with these as briefly as I can.

SCIENCE DISTORTED

First, Collingwood distorts science by assimilating instances to concepts. That he should do this follows from his failure to make the correct distinction between the actual existing objects in the material world and the conceptual ideas we have of these. We have seen above that, for Collingwood, the former have at the best a secondary and derivative type of existence. Let us examine a curious consequence of the assimilation of instances to concepts.

According to traditional classification, which Collingwood asserts is applicable in mathematics and empirical science, the

instances of a mathematical or scientific concept will fit without overlap into the classes and sub-classes provided for them.

Now, Collingwood also asserts in his demonstration of the hypothetical nature of the concepts of mathematics and science, that the instances--actual existing triangles, straight lines, circles, and so forth--do not really exist. There is nowhere in the world such a thing as a perfect circle. Such an entity exists only in the mathematician's mind: it is a concept. The same goes for the instances of the concepts of science. The concept 'rheumatic fever', for example, is a so-called 'specific disease'. It is a set of symptoms, abstract and generalized, which is only approximated by individually existing cases of rheumatic fever. So far, mathematicians and scientists will probably agree. But what follows?

Suppose the concept 'circle' is a sort of mathematical cookie cutter. (It is necessary to my analogy that the reader assume a cookie cutter which is not used for cutting cookies, but for measuring them after they are baked.⁷) If Collingwood is right in saying that there is no overlap, then when this cookie cutter is placed over actually existing circles, they will all fit exactly. But Collingwood has already told us that they will not fit--none of them will fit.

If they do not fit, they are only approximately circles. They are not really circles. If they are not circles, this must be because they are at least partly something else. But this is the same as saying that they do not fit the traditional system of classification:

7. It is also necessary to suppose that the cookie cutter does not discriminate between sizes of circles. It will fit any size of circle, if that circle is perfectly circular.

they overlap. The same argument will apply with equal force to the concepts and instances of science.

Hence the overlap of classes, which Collingwood thought was a characteristic peculiar to philosophy, is really a characteristic of all science. In admitting that actual objects differ from our ideas of them, Collingwood has introduced an item of scientific materialism into his philosophy, with the result that he can no longer maintain this so-called "special characteristic" of philosophy, the overlap of classes.

As for the overlap of classes, so for the Scale of Forms. This type of overlap is not, as Collingwood assumed, a peculiar characteristic of philosophical concepts. The reader will recall that at the end of the chapter on the scale of forms, I gave an example--the scale of the forms of behaviour--to illustrate the characteristics of this type of overlap.⁸ The example is one of my own. I believe it illustrates what Collingwood meant by the scale of forms. But from Collingwood's point of view it is an unfortunate example, because it is drawn from the field of science, where such examples, supposedly, are not to be found.

To sum up. Collingwood distorts science by failing to make the proper distinction between instances and concepts. His characterization of mathematics and science as fields where traditional classification will apply, is a result of this failure to distinguish correctly. The traditional system of classification is a conceptual framework; it is its 'ideal' nature which gives it its rigidity and exactitude.

8. Chapter V, Part Four, pages 49-52.

When, however, Collingwood is justifying the applicability of traditional classification to mathematical and scientific instances, he has to assert the conformity of the instances to the concepts. In doing this he overlooks the material nature of the instances--existing objects--which makes them not conformable to concepts, precisely because they lack conceptual rigidity and exactitude.

Later, Collingwood wishes to demonstrate another point: this time, that mathematical and scientific knowledge is hypothetical. To do this he has to assert what is true--that the objects studied by mathematics and science do not conform exactly to the conceptual framework. Enter the Overlap of Classes and the Scale of Forms into the field of mathematics and science.

Collingwood draws a further conclusion from the fact that the theories of science are, as he has demonstrated, hypothetical. Since this is so, he says, the material world which these theories represent is also hypothetical; it is a construction of the mind. Hence the proper object of knowledge is the mind itself.

But this is a 'non sequitur'. Certainly the theories of science are hypothetical. They are theories about the material world: not the material world itself. The material world is concrete, and remains concrete, no matter what happens to the theories which attempt to explain it. And, we may add, whatever happens to the theories which attempt to explain it away.

The total result of Collingwood's distortion of science is this: it removes mathematics (which is already quite far removed) and science still further away from the actual reality with which they

must deal--making them far more abstract than they actually are. Of course, this is only so if mathematicians and scientists accept Collingwood's view of their endeavours, and the advice which Collingwood proffers. They should not: it is bad advice.

PHILOSOPHY
DISTORTED

If Collingwood's idealistic error distorts science, it also distorts philosophy. The distortion of science is accomplished by neglecting a proper distinction; the distortion of philosophy by making an improper one--by separating thoughts from things. What are the concrete results of this separation?

First of all, it results in Collingwood's re-affirmation of the Socratic principle that knowledge is in the mind and of the mind, to be drawn out by a process of reflection. It places a substantial element of Collingwood's philosophy within the idealistic trend which is Parmenides' legacy to the present.

This is inconsistent with Collingwood's assertion that philosophers can inform practical thinkers. How can they? Philosophers are concerned with an inward reality; scientists with an outward one. They stand back to back.

The false separation of thoughts from things is also the ground for the assertion that philosophy, properly pursued, occupies a sort of pinnacle--free from the errors which are a necessary part of objective knowledge. To say, as Collingwood does, that philosophical judgments are categorical--that their objects exist in being thought about, confers a sort of victory upon philosophy in its "struggle" with the sciences. The self-bestowed laurel wreath may have but a brief tenure upon the philosophical pate. Doubtless the ideas of philosophy

exist, but are they right? This is the question that the scientist will ask, and Collingwood's answer that they must be right because they exist and are consistent with each other, ought not to satisfy the scientist. Nor the philosopher.

Indeed, the whole idea of the opposition between philosophy and the other forms of thought (Speculum Mentis--the Scale of the Forms of Knowledge) must be reviewed in the light of these objections. The reader will remember that, according to Collingwood, philosophy was opposed to these forms because they accepted, explicitly or by implication, the existence of the material world which philosophy rejects. If, as I am contending, the material world does exist, and if philosophy recognizes its existence, as I am contending it should, then the ground for the opposition between philosophy and the other forms of thought vanishes. Philosophers can no longer pontificate. Like the practitioners of the other forms of knowledge, they engage in their own way (and with a new humility) in the programme of discovering what the material world is.

The opposition between the "lesser" forms--art, religion, science, and history--will also need re-interpretation. If the object exists, then we may assume that there are different ways of approaching it--each with its value. They may be complementary, as each contributes its portion to the fuller understanding of the world.

This can be true of all but religion. If we accept Collingwood's belief that religion is essentially the assertion of the indescribable supernatural which is accepted upon faith, we will have to regard religion as an error. That is, if we also accept my contention that the material world is not indescribable and supernatural, but

exists and may be described.

Indeed, the inclusion of religion upon the scale of the forms of knowledge in the first place, may have been the result of the affinity of the religious negation of the world for Collingwood's own philosophical negation. The only reason why it could not share the pinnacle with philosophy may have been--not that the pinnacle is very small--but that the religious negation is not theoretical enough.

To conclude the criticism. The above errors are results and expressions of a conflict in Collingwood's philosophy; a conflict between the method by which knowledge is attained, and the substantive definition of knowledge as knowledge of the mind itself. The method is essentially correct, and is applicable in all forms of knowledge. The substantive definition is false, and it appears to be true of philosophy only because philosophy is essentially concerned with thinking about thought. Moreover, this appearance can only be maintained so long as we fail to recognize that, abstract as the thoughts of philosophy may be, they still have their roots, in the actual concrete experience of man.

RESIDUE What is left of the philosophy of Collingwood after these criticisms? There is a substantial residue.

The idea of system is intact, but system must be based upon the actions of men in the world, not upon abstract speculation--the result of an idealistic bias.

Philosophers will still reflect upon the theory of other thinkers. This is philosophy's share of the division of mental labor. But the philosopher no longer deludes himself that it is his

main aim to point out an error which undermines all activities of practical, objective thought. He has recognized that the mote was in his own eye. He may still, enlightened by the understanding that the material world exists, point out inconsistencies within and between the theories of different thinkers. He must still (and this Collingwood most effectively demonstrates) reflect upon his own thinking, thus to render his contribution to others more effective.

Finally, Collingwood's methodological injunctions--the Overlap of Classes; the Scale of Forms; the fusion of definition and description, of degree and kind, of opposition and distinction, of deduction and induction; the doctrine of making the implicit explicit; the Logic of Question and Answer--all of these are freed from the bondage which Collingwood imposed upon them.

They may now become a fruitful contribution to the theory of knowledge in general. If they are employed in coming to know the material world which Collingwood denied, the mind may become a more effective mirror in which the lineaments of this world may be observed and analyzed.

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